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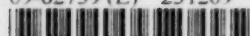
3-12 February 2010

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Provisional annotated agenda and proposed organization of work

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
 - (a) Priority theme: Social integration;
 - (b) Review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups:
 - (i) World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons;
 - (ii) World Programme of Action for Youth;
 - (iii) Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002;
 - (iv) Family issues, policies and programmes;
 - (c) Emerging issues: Policy responses on employment and the social consequences of the financial and economic crisis, including its gender dimension.
4. Programme questions and other matters.
5. Provisional agenda for the forty-ninth session of the Commission.
6. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its forty-eighth session.



Annotations

1. Election of officers

Rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council stipulates that, at the commencement of the first meeting of a regular session, the Commission shall elect from among the representatives of its members a Chairperson, one or more Vice-Chairpersons and such other officers as may be required. Following the established practice, the Commission shall elect a Chairperson and four Vice-Chairpersons and designate one of the Vice-Chairpersons also as Rapporteur (Vice-Chairperson-and-Rapporteur).

In accordance with subparagraph (c) of its decision 2002/210, the Economic and Social Council decided that immediately following the closure of a regular session, the Commission for Social Development would hold the first meeting of its subsequent regular session for the sole purpose of electing the new Chairperson and other members of the Bureau. Consequently, the Commission held the first meeting of its forty-eighth session on 13 February 2009, immediately following the closure of the forty-seventh session, and elected by acclamation Mr. Leslie Kojo Christian (Ghana) as Chairperson of the Commission and Mr. Miloslav Hetteš (Slovakia), Mr. Christian Sieber (Switzerland), Ms. Shoko Fujimoto (Japan) and Ms. Connie Taracena Secaira (Guatemala) as Vice-Chairpersons.

At the opening meeting of the forty-eighth session of the Commission, on 3 February 2010, the Commission will designate one of its Vice-Chairpersons as having rapporteurial responsibilities.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 7 of the rules of procedure requires that, after the election of its officers at the beginning of each session, the Commission shall adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda. The provisional agenda and documentation for the forty-eighth session of the Commission were approved by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 2009/244.

The proposed organization of work of the Commission for Social Development at its forty-eighth session (see annex I) has been prepared pursuant to relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to facilitate the consideration of agenda items within the time frame available and in accordance with the conference services allocated to the Commission. The timetable should be considered tentative and indicative: if the Commission completes its consideration of an item ahead of schedule, it may wish to proceed immediately to the next item.

The Commission is scheduled to meet from Wednesday, 3 February, to Friday, 12 February 2010. Arrangements have been made to hold morning and afternoon meetings during the session: morning meetings will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and afternoon meetings from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Documentation

Provisional annotated agenda and proposed organization of work (E/CN.5/2010/1)

3. Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/46 on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world", the Commission will undertake regular assessment of the implementation of the Copenhagen commitments and the further initiatives adopted at Geneva. At its forty-eighth session, the Commission will commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995, in the form of a high-level panel discussion.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/CN.5/2010/3)

(a) Priority theme: social integration

In its resolution 2008/19 of 24 July 2008, the Economic and Social Council decided that the theme for the 2009-2010 review and policy cycle would be "Social integration", taking into account its interrelationship with poverty eradication and full employment and decent work for all. The Commission reviewed the theme at its forty-seventh session in 2009 and will complete the biennial cycle by adopting action-oriented policy recommendations on social integration at its forty-eighth session. The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General on the priority theme for the policy part of the 2009-2010 cycle.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on promoting social integration (E/CN.5/2010/2)

(b) Review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups

(i) World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons

(ii) World Programme of Action for Youth

(iii) Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

(iv) Family issues, policies and programmes

The Commission will consider issues pertaining to the situation of social groups. The Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development will present an oral report.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming disability in the development agenda (E/CN.5/2010/6)

Report of the Secretary-General on the first review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (E/CN.5/2010/4)

(c) Emerging issues

In its resolution 2006/18, the Economic and Social Council decided to include the agenda item entitled "Emerging issues" in the programme of work of the Commission. The members of the Bureau, in consultation with their respective regional groups, agreed that the theme for discussion under this agenda item during the forty-eighth session would be "Policy responses on employment and the social consequences of the financial and economic crisis, including its gender dimension". A note by the Secretariat will be available to facilitate the discussion.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on "Policy responses on employment and the social consequences of the financial and economic crisis, including its gender dimension" (E/CN.5/2010/8)

4. Programme questions and other matters

Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2012-2013

The Commission will have before it the proposed strategic framework of the Secretariat for the biennium 2012-2013 in the field of social development.

Documentation

Conference room paper on the proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, subprogramme 3, Social policy and development, of programme 7, Economic and social affairs (E/CN.5/2010/CRP.1)

5. Provisional agenda for the forty-ninth session of the Commission

In accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission will have before it the draft provisional agenda for its forty-ninth session, together with an indication of the documentation to be submitted for its consideration.

Documentation

Draft provisional agenda for the forty-ninth session of the Commission (E/CN.5/2010/L.1)*

6. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its forty-eighth session

In accordance with rule 37 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council, the Commission shall submit to the Council a report on the work of its forty-eighth session.

Documentation

Draft report of the Commission on its forty-eighth session (E/CN.5/2010/L.2)*

* To be issued as in-session documents.

Annex I

Proposed organization of work (3-12 February 2010)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Documentation programme</i>
Week of 3-5 February 2010		
Wednesday, 3 February		
a.m.	1. Election of officers	
	2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (E/CN.5/2010/1)	
	3. Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:	Introduction of documentation under agenda item 3, 3 (a) and (b)
	(a) Priority theme: social integration	Report of the Secretary-General on promoting social integration (E/CN.5/2010/2)
	(b) Review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups	Report of the Secretary-General on the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (E/CN.5/2010/3)
	(i) World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons	Report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming disability in the development agenda (E/CN.5/2010/6)
	(ii) World Programme of Action for Youth	
	(iii) Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002	Report of the Secretary-General on the first review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (E/CN.5/2010/4)
	(iv) Family issues, policies and programmes	
	3 (a) (continued)	Presentation of the outcome of the Civil Society Forum held on 2 February 2010
		General discussion
p.m.	3 (continued)	High-level panel discussion to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Discussion programme</i>
Thursday, 4 February		
a.m.	3 (a) (<i>continued</i>)	High-level panel on social integration
p.m.	3 (a) (<i>concluded</i>)	Presentation by the Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers: volunteerism and social inclusion (E/CN.5/2010/CRP.1)
		General discussion
Friday, 5 February		
a.m.	3 (a) (<i>concluded</i>)	General discussion
	3 (b) (<i>continued</i>)	Presentation by the Special Rapporteur on Disability
p.m.	3 (b) (<i>continued</i>)	General discussion
Week of 8-12 February 2010		
Monday, 8 February		
a.m.	3 (b) (<i>concluded</i>)	General discussion
p.m.	3 (c)	Introduction and general discussion
		Note by the Secretariat: Policy responses on employment and the social consequences of the financial and economic crisis, including its gender dimension (E/CN.5/2010/8)
Tuesday, 9 February		
a.m.	3 (a) and 3 (b)	Informal consultations (no plenary meeting)
		1 p.m.: deadline for submission of draft proposals
p.m.	3 (a) and 3 (b)	Informal consultations (no plenary meeting)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Documentation programme</i>
Wednesday, 10 February		
a.m.	4. Programme questions and other matters	Proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, subprogramme 3, Social policy and development (E/CN.5/2010/CRP.1)
	3 (a) and 3 (b)	Informal consultations
p.m.	3 (a) and 3 (b)	Informal consultations (no plenary meeting)
Thursday, 11 February		
a.m.	3 (a) and 3 (b)	Introduction of draft proposals Informal consultations (following plenary meeting)
p.m.	3 (a) and 3 (b)	Informal consultations (no plenary meeting)
Friday, 12 February		
a.m. and p.m.	5. Provisional agenda for the forty-ninth session of the Commission	<i>Action on draft proposals</i> Adoption of the provisional agenda for the next session
	6. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its forty-eighth session	Adoption of the report Closure of the session ^a

^a in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2002/210, the Commission, immediately following the closure of the forty-eighth session, will hold the first meeting of its forty-ninth session for the sole purpose of electing the new Chairman and other members of the Bureau, in accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council.

Annex II

Membership of the Commission for Social Development at its forty-eighth session (2010)

(46 members; four-year term)

<i>Membership</i>	<i>Term expires at close of the session in the year</i>
1. Albania	2013
2. Andorra	2011
3. Argentina	2012
4. Armenia	2012
5. Benin	2011
6. Brazil	2013
7. Cameroon	2011
8. China	2013
9. Cuba	2011
10. Egypt	2011
11. El Salvador	2012
12. Ethiopia	2013
13. France	2012
14. Gabon	2013
15. Germany	2012
16. Ghana	2012
17. Guatemala	2012
18. Haiti	2013
19. India	2011
20. Iran (Islamic Republic of)	2013
21. Italy	2013
22. Jamaica	2011
23. Japan	2012
24. Lesotho	2013
25. Mauritius	2013

<i>Membership</i>	<i>Term expires at close of the session on the year</i>
26. Mexico	2011
27. Namibia	2011
28. Nepal	2011
29. Netherlands	2013
30. Nigeria	2012
31. Pakistan	2012
32. Philippines	2013
33. Qatar	2013
34. Republic of Korea	2012
35. Russian Federation	2012
36. Senegal	2012
37. Slovakia	2011
38. Spain	2011
39. Sudan	2012
40. Sweden	2013
41. Switzerland	2013
42. Turkey	2011
43. United Arab Emirates	2011
44. United States of America	2012
45. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2013
46. (Vacancy — Eastern European Group)	2013



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Commission for Social Development

Forty-eighth session

3-12 February 2010

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
priority theme: social integration**

Promoting social integration

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/19, in which the Council decided that the priority theme for the 2009-2010 review and policy cycle of the Commission for Social Development should be "Social integration", taking into account its relationships with poverty eradication and full employment and decent work for all. The report provides an overview of current social integration policies and obstacles to their implementation. It focuses on redistributive, anti-discriminatory and participatory policies promoting social integration and concludes with recommendations for future action.

* E/CN.5/2010/1.



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Overview of existing policies promoting social integration and obstacles to their implementation	4
A. Approaches to promoting social, civic and economic participation	4
B. Current regional and national priorities and strategies to promote social integration	7
C. Social inclusion evaluation frameworks	12
III. Social integration policies promoting inclusion through empowerment.	13
A. Redistributive policies	13
B. Combating discrimination: promoting and protecting individual rights.	14
C. Participatory policies	16
IV. Conclusions and recommendations	17
A. Conclusions	17
B. Recommendations	18

I. Introduction

1. At the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, Governments made a commitment to promote social integration through fostering inclusive societies that are stable, safe, just and tolerant, respect diversity and promote equality of opportunity and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons. Social integration was thus endorsed as the overall framework for advancing social development and social policymaking.
2. Despite that commitment, the goal of creating "a society for all" has remained elusive. Although there have been some advances since the Copenhagen Summit, societies are still far from being stable, just and equal. Contrary to the principles of social justice, millions of people are unable to meet their basic needs and remain disempowered and voiceless.
3. Social trends such as changing family size and living arrangements, migration and urbanization and the HIV/AIDS pandemic have led to a weakening of family and traditional support networks. While full employment and decent work are recognized as central to social inclusion, casual and informal jobs and long-term unemployment are increasingly the norm rather than the exception.
4. Social relations are often marked by racism, ageism and prejudice. Abuse, violence and exploitation towards those at the margins of society remain widespread and have not been adequately addressed. Gender-based discrimination, the most prevalent form of institutionalized inequality, continues to obstruct social inclusion efforts. The situation of indigenous and older women is especially critical, as they are subjected to multiple forms of discrimination, violence and neglect.
5. Decades of actions based on the assumption that policies aimed at increasing economic growth and expanding markets would simultaneously advance social development have shown that sometimes the opposite is true. Although there have been limited attempts to make economic growth pro-poor and more inclusive, economic policies have often been pursued with little regard for social consequences such as greater levels of inequality and insecurity.
6. Social integration policies have been developed on a piecemeal basis, concentrating mostly on the advancement of certain social groups. This focused approach has had a limited effect on the social advancement of groups, as their participation in the design and monitoring of policies relating to their well-being is still inadequate. Normative prescriptions have seldom been accompanied by implementation and evaluation frameworks, and this has further impeded the actual progress of group-specific instruments.
7. The current global economic and financial crisis, coming on the heels of the food and energy crisis, is likely to have disastrous and prolonged social impacts. Rising unemployment, cuts in social spending and diminished access to credit contribute to greater poverty and inequality and are more likely to affect the most vulnerable and marginalized persons in society. Faced with diminishing resources and growing hardship, people are less able to invest in the nutrition, health and education of their children, thus reinforcing the intergenerational transmission of poverty and exclusion. Socio-economic instability may lead to growing social tension and unrest, jeopardizing social cohesion.

8. To advance social integration, political leaders should articulate a clear vision of inclusiveness within the specific context of their society and mobilize collective social will to support this vision. In order to realize this vision, it is necessary to: (a) adopt a coherent approach to economic and social policymaking; (b) identify and remove the barriers and obstacles that prevent the economic, social and civic participation of certain social groups and individuals; and (c) frame social policy within a process of participation and accountability.

9. The present report provides an overview of existing policies to promote social integration and the obstacles to their implementation. It focuses on the current economic, social and civic participation policies to foster social integration and highlights regional and national priorities and strategies for inclusion. The report emphasizes the importance of redistributive, anti-discriminatory and participatory policies to advance social integration and concludes with specific recommendations for action-oriented policies to build socially cohesive societies.

II. Overview of existing policies promoting social integration and obstacles to their implementation

10. There are no blueprints for successful social integration policies, or a "one size fits all" approach. Following the Social Summit, Governments pursued a variety of approaches to fight different forms of exclusion and promote social integration. Policies focused on either promoting social and civic participation or improving economic inclusion through better access to labour markets. Often, such policies targeted specific groups in an effort to implement commitments enshrined in existing international instruments. Despite those efforts, by and large national comprehensive strategies have yet to be developed and implemented.

A. Approaches to promoting social, civic and economic participation

Social and civic participation

11. To increase participation and political inclusion, many Governments have improved their engagement with communities through administrative and political decentralization to local authorities; decision-making is more likely to be focused at the community or municipal level and involve participatory tools such as community needs assessments, citizens' councils, public dialogues and consultations. These are supported by dedicated interactive websites or e-government initiatives. Such initiatives offer useful additions to the system of political representation through the electoral process and offer greater opportunities for direct participation by people as citizens, residents or service users.

12. Participatory planning and management in local governance is increasingly seen as vital for the success of social inclusion strategies, which typically include poverty reduction as a major component. "Community engagement" strategies, where local government and local communities plan the development of local services, may evolve over time into "community empowerment", where citizens can make decisions about the delivery of public services. Participatory budgeting is an example of a best practice in this area. Assessments indicate that participatory budgeting can lead to a shift in the local political culture from confrontational

tactics and corrupt political bargaining to constructive debate and civic engagement in governance.¹ In Latin America, participatory budgeting has been implemented in approximately 200 cities in Brazil, as well as in Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay. Cities in other parts of the world have experimented with the process as well.² Statistical analysis of participatory budgeting in Brazil indicates that it increases the share of public expenditure devoted to health care and results in major reductions in child mortality and improved access to basic services.

13. Lack of participation may be a consequence of spatial exclusion, particularly in urban settings. Policies that address spatial exclusion have focused primarily on improving physical infrastructure, including transportation and housing for poorer communities. In this regard, the measures taken typically enhance security of tenure, provide housing subsidies and adequate basic utilities, and offer free basic services. Often, policies addressing spatial exclusion also offer training to improve employability and to empower underrepresented groups to participate in decision-making. Such schemes may also contribute to reducing levels of crime.

14. Recognized by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme as a best practice, the redevelopment of Cato Manor in Durban, South Africa, is an example of inclusive urban planning for social integration aimed at reducing socio-economic inequalities in cities. In addition to providing housing and sustainable urban infrastructure, the project included parallel supportive programmes for the development of social facilities, including schools, libraries, parks, sports centres, playgrounds and community health clinics. It also supported communication tools, including a community newspaper, radio station and website. This model formed the basis for other reconstruction initiatives in South Africa.³

Economic participation

15. Economic inclusion is central to social integration, and employment strategies have been implemented to improve employability at different stages in life through education and training. Such policies have focused on removing discriminatory barriers to employment such as those based on race, ethnicity, age, disability or gender, which can prevent people from actively participating in the labour market or discourage them from seeking employment. Efforts to improve employability through improved education and training have also been initiated. Employers have been offered incentives to hire young workers, older workers, workers with disabilities or the long-term unemployed. Training in entrepreneurship and action to facilitate self-employment, including increased access to credit, have encouraged greater economic participation.

Group-specific responses

16. Issues and concerns specific to certain groups continue to be insufficiently considered in overall development planning and overlooked in the monitoring of development activities. In some instances, group-specific issues are simply not part of the development agenda. For example, although older persons are generally more likely to live in extreme poverty than the rest of the population, their concerns are

¹ Inter-American Development Bank, "Assessment of participatory budgeting in Brazil", 2005, p. 4.

² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

³ UN-Habitat, *State of the World's Cities 2008/2009: Harmonious Cities*.

rarely part of the development agenda in the developing world.⁴ Only a small number of Governments report on the situation of specific social groups, and few reports provide consistent, disaggregated data for such groups. Comparable data is currently available only in a small number of areas, such as education and employment. Without group-specific data that is comparable across countries and regions, it is difficult to assess progress in promoting the social inclusion of different groups and the effectiveness of the associated policies.

17. Despite increasing reference to the need to empower social groups and to enable their participation in the design and implementation of policies that affect them at the national and local levels, actual efforts remain limited. Attempts have been made to strengthen independent national youth councils, older persons' organizations and advocacy groups for persons with disabilities. Efforts have also been made to promote the civic and political engagement of indigenous people. Programmes to improve intergenerational communication, such as senior volunteers mentoring youth or young people assisting older persons in nursing homes, are also being recognized as effective in building up intergenerational solidarity.

18. Between 2009 and 2050, the number of people aged 60 or older is expected to increase from 264 million to 416 million in developed countries, and from 473 million to 1.6 billion in developing countries.⁵ These demographic changes pose major policy challenges for the provision of adequate income support and appropriate health-care services for older persons.⁶ Lack of access to health care remains a persistent concern in many developing countries. There is a discernible movement towards policies and programmes that increase long-term care benefits and services and enhance training in geriatrics and gerontology. On the other hand, limited progress has been made in creating greater awareness of and preventing the abuse of older persons.⁷

19. The participation of older persons in the workplace has increased, and the employment rates of older persons in a number of countries members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, for example, have risen significantly since 2000. However, those older persons wishing to continue to be economically active face difficulties in accessing employment as well as education and training opportunities. An increasing number of developing countries have extended some form of social protection to older persons to improve their income security. HelpAge International reports that 72 countries — 46 of which are low- or middle-income countries — have instituted a social pension.⁸

20. Guided by the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond,⁹ national and regional frameworks have focused mainly on improving access by young people to education, health care, employment and participation in decision-making on relevant and important issues, including the environment, globalization, the use of new technologies, the impact of HIV/AIDS, delinquency and drug abuse. Across regions, educational attainment has expanded along with the rise in youth literacy rates, especially for girls and young women. Education,

⁴ See A/64/127.

⁵ Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision, Highlights* (2009), Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP.210.

⁶ A/64/127.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ <http://www.helpage.org/Researchandpolicy/PensionWatch>.

⁹ See General Assembly resolution 50/81.

combined with access to new technologies, has enabled young people in many countries to contribute to defining national priorities to an extent that had previously not been possible. Nevertheless, access to quality education and decent jobs remains the primary concern for young people as they transition from childhood to adulthood. Strengthening and consolidating the participation of young people and promoting their civic and political engagement remains essential to their successful social integration.

21. Following the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, many countries revisited their policies on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities. A central tenet of such policies is the identification and removal of physical, economic and cultural barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from participating in mainstream social activities. Improved access to health services, education and training, transportation, information and communication are common objectives. Despite the progress made in a number of countries, incorporating accessibility requirements at all levels of policymaking and programming remains a challenge. To a significant extent, that shortcoming can be attributed to the lack of participation by persons with disabilities in the process.

22. The adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹⁰ by the General Assembly in 2007 generated renewed impetus for and provided guidance to the process of advancing the social inclusion of indigenous peoples. Similarly, the 2008 official apologies to indigenous peoples issued by the Governments of Australia and of Canada recognized past injustices and marked a move away from laws and policies of forced assimilation. They also brought into sharper focus the need to close gaps in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity between indigenous and non-indigenous populations. The core issues of indigenous land ownership and the preservation of indigenous cultural heritage have not been adequately addressed. Anti-discrimination measures and policies promoting the empowerment of indigenous peoples through effective participation in decision-making have not yet taken root in most countries with indigenous populations.

23. While policies for social integration should address the specific barriers to inclusion faced by each group, the groups share common concerns. In particular, their concerns focus on the issues of empowerment, equality, inclusion and participation; for most groups, discrimination, the persistence of societal biases and stereotypes remain major obstacles to social integration. The groups also share more specific concerns, such as access to quality education and health care and to decent work.

B. Current regional and national priorities and strategies to promote social integration

24. Regional and national social integration strategies were developed to tackle the most urgent priorities. For most of the developing world, the provision of basic services, including education and health care, is central to advancing social integration. In some countries, priority is given to policies designed to overcome entrenched discrimination; in others, Governments focus on improving the situation of specific, vulnerable groups. Attempts have been made to create evaluation frameworks to monitor policies that aim to promote inclusion.

¹⁰ General Assembly resolution 61/295, annex.

Africa

25. The “African Common Position on Social Integration” adopted at the meeting of African Union ministers in charge of social development held in Windhoek in October 2008 emphasizes that social cohesion rests on universal access to education and skills development, health, shelter, urban development, environmental protection, food and water security and appropriate nutrition. Faced with the reality that in the majority of African countries 50 to 70 per cent of people live in extreme poverty, the reduction of poverty through access to basic services, mainly health and education and some forms of basic social protection, is seen as essential for social integration.

26. Basic literacy and numeracy are prerequisites for effective economic and social participation and appropriate investments in basic education for all. While they are not in themselves sufficient to overcome social exclusion, they are universally seen as indispensable to the promotion of social integration. Given that such investments have generally focused on increasing enrolment rates, that approach has sometimes had unintended consequences, including larger class sizes, insufficient teaching materials, a decline in the quality of teaching and higher dropout rates. The imposition of “user fees” in many developing countries, often promoted on the grounds of efficiency and cost recovery, has sometimes limited gains in enrolment.

27. In many developing countries with a nominal system for the universal provision of basic services, evidence points to the existence of a dual system consisting of the public service, which is free and universal but generally underfunded and neglected, and a private system based on payment of fees for services. That duality is particularly evident in African countries. While people with sufficient resources generally use the private sector to gain access to health and education services, people who lack sufficient resources also increasingly resort to private provision because public services do not meet their needs. It has been observed that education and health care, instead of being planned and financed domestically as a priority for social inclusion and a matter of social justice, are gradually becoming donor-funded through programme support. This may, in effect, reduce national commitments to inclusiveness and solidarity.

28. While the need to shift to more encompassing social provisioning remains urgent, a retrenchment of State capacity for social budgeting has been observed in Africa in the past two decades. Considerable entitlement failure is directly linked to the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS across many countries. Reductions in social expenditure are thought to have brought about a crisis of citizenship and statehood in most African countries.¹¹ There is little doubt that the continuing retrenchment of State capacity threatens social inclusion.

29. Several African countries have introduced new contributory insurance schemes as well as some basic forms of social protection, with South Africa and Namibia instituting tax-financed basic pension systems and Lesotho providing a non-contributory universal old-age pension. Cash transfer programmes are expanding as well,¹² such as the Food Subsidy Programme in Mozambique or the Productive Safety Net Programme in

¹¹ Jimí O. Adésinà, “Social Policy and the Quest for Inclusive Development: Research Findings from Sub-Saharan Africa”, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Geneva, May 2007.

¹² <http://www.ipc-undp.org/PageNewSiteb.do?id=120&active=3>.

Ethiopia. South Africa has consolidated programmes focusing on cash transfers to different target groups, including older persons and orphans; the coverage of its child grants system was substantially extended over the last decade to more than 4 million beneficiaries.¹³

Asia and the Pacific

30. Given the large number of unemployed young people, the social integration of youth is a growing priority in Asia-Pacific countries. Many of them have adopted national youth policies with a focus on education, employment and health. The implementation of such policies remains limited owing to the lack of commitments, resources, coordination and implementation mechanisms.¹⁴

31. Regarding migration, several Governments promote overseas deployment and the placement of their workforce and are actively involved in the protection of their overseas workers.¹⁵ Few countries in the region have ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and therefore few migrants in the region benefit from its protection.

32. As the number of older persons is increasing rapidly in several countries, including China, where their number is expected to double between 2005 and 2015, meeting the need for social security, living arrangements and health care is a growing concern. Regional frameworks for the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, including the Shanghai Implementation Strategy and the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific, recommend actions on priority areas to advance the social integration of older persons.

33. In South Asia, barriers to social integration arise from social stratification in the form of castes as well as ethnic, racial, religious and cultural groups. In countries with a caste system, social inclusion policies have focused on promoting greater access to public institutions. In India, quotas exist for admission to schools and employment in Government services for the lower castes, and a number of seats in Parliament are reserved for Dalits. Afghanistan has made efforts towards the inclusion of women, mostly through the provision of free education for girls. So far, such measures have had a limited impact on the situation of women owing to prevalent exclusionary practices and customs.

Latin America

34. In Latin America, traditional sources of exclusion are increasingly compounded by new forms of exclusion associated with democratization, economic transformation and globalization. Indigenous peoples, by far the most excluded group in the region, face systematic discrimination that reduces their ability to benefit from and contribute to development. Against that background, anti-discriminatory measures have been taken in several countries in relation to access to health, housing, education, financial credit and political participation, with varying levels of success.

¹³ See International Labour Organization, report of the Tripartite meeting of experts on strategies for the extension of social security coverage: "Extending Social Security to All — A review of challenges, present practice and strategic options", Geneva, 2-4 September 2009.

¹⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Fact sheet on youth, 2007.

¹⁵ Including Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Fact sheet on International Migration, 2007).

35. Social inclusion policy initiatives in Latin America focus largely on remedying the effects of past discrimination through affirmative action programmes.¹⁶ To promote the inclusion of women and tackle the persistent problem of their marginalization, disempowerment and underrepresentation in the political process, a number of Latin American Governments have adopted gender quotas for national elections.¹⁷ On average, such laws have improved women's political participation by 9 per cent. The success of quotas in a number of countries, such as Argentina and Costa Rica, indicates that the State can promote parity in decision-making.¹⁸

36. In many Latin American countries, cash transfer programmes have been successfully built into broader social protection strategies. Targeted social transfers are well established in the region, and several programmes such as Bolsa Familia, in Brazil; Oportunidades, in Mexico; and Chile Solidario exemplify that approach. They aim to promote active citizenship and the capacity to defend rights and live up to obligations and duties.

37. Such programmes are credited with successfully meeting basic welfare objectives, namely, reducing short-term poverty through directed expenditures, decreasing malnutrition (stunting) among young children, increasing educational enrolment, lowering dropout and repetition rates, and reducing child labour.¹⁹ Some attribute recent declines in inequality in Latin America, as measured by the Gini coefficient, to government monetary and in-kind transfers.

38. Despite many inclusionary characteristics, social transfer programmes, and conditional cash transfers in particular, have not yet proved effective in ensuring inclusion and poverty reduction within a broader policy context. Critics note that conditional cash transfers to families with children, where women are the main beneficiaries, are restrictive of other groups, including those excluded spatially, persons with disabilities or older persons. An evaluation of conditional cash transfers and their contribution to the promotion of social inclusion indicates that they do bring about improvements in education rates and health outcomes, and have been linked to reductions in child labour.²⁰ Concerns remain, however, about how such programmes are implemented: to be most effective, cash transfer programmes should not treat beneficiaries in a paternalistic way or as recipients of charity, but should be founded on a rights-based approach that regards access to education and health care as an entitlement of citizenship.

Developed countries

39. Social integration in Europe is promoted at both the national and regional levels. Under the open method of coordination of the European Union, common

¹⁶ Inter-American Development Bank, *Outsiders? The Changing Patterns of Exclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Washington, D.C., 2008.

¹⁷ National electoral gender quotas have been instituted in Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Peru. See Mayra Buvinic and Jacqueline Mazza with Ruthanne Deutsch (eds.), *Inclusion and economic development in Latin America*, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C., 2004, p. 336.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ International Labour Organization, *Social protection and inclusion: Experiences and policy issues*, Geneva, 2006.

²⁰ International Labour Office, *Child labour and conditional cash transfer programmes in Latin America*, December 2007.

objectives are set, national policies developed and outcomes reported.²¹ Social integration policies in the European Union focus mainly on the legal enforcement of anti-discrimination laws; preferential group-targeted programmes and comprehensive spatially targeted interventions. Policies often focus on vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, linguistic or ethnic minorities, the homeless, persons with disabilities and migrants. Social integration policies for groups include targeted employment, housing and welfare assistance and bilingual and civic education for immigrants.

40. In several European Union member States, social exclusion units have been established to tackle the manifestations of spatial exclusion such as neglected housing, high prevalence of crime, unemployment, inadequate schools and general community breakdown.

41. Attempts have been made to develop "social capital" through the provision of resources for community development. Such initiatives are aimed at supporting the development of community networks, mutual help and civic engagement, as well as a sense of community identity and solidarity. The strength of community networks has been linked to more effective and responsive public institutions, local economic development and prosperity. It is hoped that developing social capital will provide a more holistic response to social exclusion.

42. As in developing countries, policies fostering economic independence through labour market participation are a common priority for European Union member countries and have often proved effective in restoring people's employability. Concern has been raised that a possible side effect of such policies is decreased recognition of other socially useful types of work, such as child rearing by mothers or voluntary and informal work by those outside the formal labour market.²²

43. Australia has recently developed a policy design and delivery toolkit for policies aimed at increasing individual and community resources, opportunities and capabilities through investments in skills development, education and training. Implementation and monitoring frameworks are to be developed with special emphasis on coordination among Government departments and other stakeholders.²³ A number of Government departments have already established social inclusion units to guide implementation, and the Australian Social Inclusion Board was created in 2008. Current priorities for Australian social inclusion policies include children at risk of disadvantage, disengaged young people, jobless families and those with locational disadvantage.²⁴

44. Closing the gap for indigenous Australians is a priority as well. The Social Inclusion Principles for Australia state that, in addition to initiatives to improve health, education, housing and employment prospects, recognizing the varied and positive contributions of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will also be an important feature of the social inclusion approach.²⁵

²¹ Eric Marlier, A. B. Atkinson, Bea Cantillon and Brian Nolan, *The EU and Social Inclusion: Facing the Challenges*, Policy Press, United Kingdom, 2007.

²² Rik van Berkel and Iver Hornemann Møller, eds. *Active Social Policies in the EU: Inclusion through Participation?*, Policy Press, United Kingdom, 2002, p. 134.

²³ The Australian Public Service Social Inclusion policy design and delivery toolkit, Commonwealth of Australia, 2009; available at www.socialinclusion.gov.au/Documents/SIToolKit.pdf.

²⁴ Social Inclusion Ministers Meeting communiqué, Adelaide, 18 September 2009; available at www.deewr.gov.au.

²⁵ Australian Government, *Social Inclusion Principles for Australia*; available at <http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/SIAGenda/Principles/Documents/SIPrinciples.pdf>.

45. As in Australia, multiculturalism constitutes a basic tenet of Canadian society and is a basis for the formulation and enactment of social policies, including those aimed at removing barriers to participation and promoting equal treatment and protection while respecting and valuing diversity. The strengthening of indigenous cultural identity through the provision of support to indigenous youth centres in urban areas and the promotion of community involvement and cross-cultural awareness is seen as contributing to social cohesion. Multicultural education is part of a larger complex of policies addressing social and cultural inequality in Canada. School curricula are developed to promote tolerance and respect for diversity, with a curriculum on world citizenship to educate future responsible citizens.

46. In the United States, social inclusion policies have focused on expanding opportunity, helping the most vulnerable and strengthening families. Recent efforts were made to reinforce anti-discrimination laws, particularly in relation to employment. Affirmative action policies, a policy tool for both the federal Government and many state authorities since the 1960s, have helped to equalize opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged ethnic communities, women, persons with disabilities and veterans. The validity of affirmative action policies has been increasingly questioned, and they have been gradually revised to address concerns of possible reverse discrimination.²⁶

C. Social inclusion evaluation frameworks

47. The World Social Summit noted that the implementation of its Programme of Action at the national level required defining time-bound goals and targets for enhancing social integration within the national context, as well as developing quantitative and qualitative indicators of social development, including social integration, to monitor the impact of social policies and programmes and improve their effectiveness.

48. Many evaluation frameworks aimed at analysing and measuring the multiple dimensions of social inclusion have been developed at local levels. At the regional level, the work on social inclusion indicators has been advanced primarily by the European Union. Besides income, the European System of Social Indicators comprises the long-term unemployment rate, persons living in jobless households, early school leavers not in education or training, life expectancy at birth, self-defined status by income level and Gini coefficient. In addition, indicators are being developed that span disparities, inequalities and social exclusion. Another area under consideration is to strengthen social relations, social and political activities and engagement, quality of social relations and quality of societal institutions.

49. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development *Society at a Glance* provides indicators of social exclusion/inclusion, such as maternal deprivation, earnings inequality, gender wage gaps, public social spending, poverty persistence and old-age pensions. The Migrant Integration Policy Index measures policies to integrate migrants in 25 European Union member States and three non-European Union countries. It includes more than 100 policy indicators focusing mostly on barriers to integration such as access to employment, family reunion

²⁶ See www.usa.gov.

possibilities, access to citizenship through naturalization, participation and anti-discrimination measures.²⁷

50. Besides long-term unemployment and income poverty, other indicators used to measure social exclusion include: social breakdown of traditional households, homelessness, crime, political disempowerment, including low registration of voters and low voter turnout, low levels of community activity, social disorder, educational underachievement and low skills and spatial concentration of marginalized groups in neglected areas.²⁸

III. Social integration policies promoting inclusion through empowerment

A. Redistributive policies

51. Poverty eradication, full employment and social integration are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Improvements in one area usually bring about improvements in the others. It is often assumed that if poverty is not tackled through the fulfilment of basic needs, social integration will remain an elusive goal, as many people are not integrated in society simply because they live in extreme poverty. Thus, policies to alleviate poverty and fight exclusion usually focus on the redistribution of resources to individuals or households in need.

52. From a social integration perspective, however, poverty is not limited to financial resources insufficient to maintain a decent standard of living. It also encompasses deprivation in the areas of education, health, and housing, which effectively means non-participation in certain spheres of life. Thus poverty is a form of exclusion that should be tackled in a holistic manner, and the provision of universal basic services in the areas of health, education and, increasingly, social protection should be seen as means of fighting poverty and exclusion and promoting social integration.

53. As part of a broader decent work agenda, social protection is indispensable for advancing social inclusion. Social protection systems, including social transfers, play a critical role in giving people access to basic services, thereby contributing to their employability and productivity. Such systems may prevent people faced with sickness, unemployment, disability or old age from falling into poverty and social exclusion. Effective social transfers enable societies to utilize their full potential for both economic growth and social well-being. Social transfers are viewed as both social and economic investments, promoting economic security and supporting decent work.

54. Despite a growing consensus that social transfers can advance social integration and prevent people from falling into poverty and social exclusion, 80 per cent of the world's population still does not have access to adequate social protection. The concept of a social protection floor is currently being promoted by the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination, under the leadership

²⁷ <http://www.integrationindex.eu/>.

²⁸ Compilation of existing approaches to capture, analyse and measure the multiple dimensions of social inclusion and other related concepts; available at http://social.un.org/compilation/compilation_list.asp.

of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization. A social protection floor is intended to ensure a set of publicly financed essential social services and social security benefits for all, including access to basic health care, income security for the elderly and the disabled, child benefits and income security, combined with employment guarantees for the poor in active age.

55. According to ILO, it is possible to finance most of the basic elements of a social protection floor, even in low-income countries. It is estimated that with an investment of about 4 per cent of gross domestic product in basic child benefits and universal pensions, the poverty headcount could be reduced by up to 40 per cent in poor countries in Africa. An ILO study of 80 national social cash transfer programmes showed that they already reach between 150 and 200 million beneficiaries. The study concludes that such transfers have a positive impact by reducing poverty, improving health, nutrition and the social status of recipients, notably women, increasing economic activity and entrepreneurial small-scale investments, notably in agriculture, and thereby contributing to social integration.¹⁸

56. Investing in education for all is instrumental for social integration. Educational systems are usually designed to respond to the needs of markets, but they should also be responsive to the cultural and social needs of people. As such, they should promote freedom of expression, tolerance, equity, responsibilities, rights and obligations as good citizens. Education for democracy is essential, too. It involves instilling democratic values and principles, informing citizens of their rights and inculcating a sense of responsibility for the well-being of a community and society at large. Multicultural education, including teaching mutual respect and tolerance and doing away with prejudice and stereotypes, is also essential to social integration.

57. Social integration policies tend to be most critical at particular stages of people's lives, when life transitions may make them prone to economic or social exclusion. Investments are especially important when young people are at school, enter first jobs, form families or exercise citizenship.²⁹ For older persons, the transition to retirement and dependence in old age or widowhood can increase vulnerability. Strategies should focus not only on ensuring income but also on providing social and emotional support. Migrant individuals and families, whether temporary or permanent, may be at a greater risk of exclusion, as they may lose traditional support networks and might face discrimination in access to employment and services. Policies aimed at promoting the inclusion of migrants in the institutions and social networks of the host society and at expanding their opportunities for economic and civic engagement are investments in building a more cohesive society.

B. Combating discrimination: promoting and protecting individual rights

58. A human rights approach to development acknowledges that poverty stems at least in part from exclusion, discrimination and disempowerment, and that the fulfilment of fundamental citizenship rights lies at the core of inclusion.

²⁹ The World Bank, *World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation* (Washington, D.C., 2006).

59. Social integration cannot be advanced so long as basic needs go unfulfilled. The recent adoption of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights reaffirmed that access to adequate food, health, housing, education and work belongs to the realm of fundamental human rights and is not the outcome of elective charity. Similarly, the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples points to the promotion and protection of all human rights as an integral part of, and an effective tool for, advancing social integration.

60. Not only is discrimination unacceptable from an ethical point of view, but racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination also hamper effective market functioning on a macro level. Stigmatization, marginalization and humiliation also deny people's essential humanity, making it difficult for them to be fully productive citizens.³⁰

61. Measures aimed at fighting discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity or residence are needed not only to promote integration, but also to complement anti-poverty and economic development programmes. Measures to combat gender discrimination, the most persistent form of discrimination and a shared concern in all regions, are perhaps the most urgent to advance social integration in many societies.

62. Barriers to equal opportunities are often embedded in social, legal and political institutions, requiring structural change, outside intervention or affirmative action. Some anti-discrimination policies focus on groups suffering the greatest discrimination. These are most common in India, Malaysia, South Africa, the United States of America and several other societies with large minority groups. A few European countries also pursue affirmative action policies for ethnic minorities. Agrarian reforms are sometimes regarded as affirmative action policies as well when favouring indigenous populations in Latin America or landless and small farmers.

63. Policies and programmes to promote the legal empowerment of the poor and other disadvantaged groups have the potential to contribute to social integration as well. The legal empowerment approach enables the poor to use the law to advance their rights and interests as citizens and economic actors, in particular with respect to protecting their assets, accessing property and benefiting from the protection of labour standards. Other legal courses of action include provisions for legal identity and birth registration, repealing or modifying laws that are biased against the poor, facilitating the creation of civil society organizations and establishing effective and impartial policing.³¹ Legal empowerment is part of a broad empowerment agenda focusing on fighting discrimination and promoting participation of people living in poverty in all aspects of the life of a society. An empowerment agenda, including legal empowerment, should encompass other disadvantaged groups as well.

³⁰ Mayra Buvinich and Jacqueline Mazza with Ruthanne Deutsch (eds.), *Inclusion and economic development in Latin America*, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C., 2004, p. 136.

³¹ See A/64/133.

C. Participatory policies

64. When addressing social relations within the specific context of their societies, Governments may focus on the extent to which people are able to participate in social life and have enough power to influence the decisions affecting their lives. When denied the opportunity to participate, people are disempowered. Such disengagement may lead to growing distrust of public authorities and institutions and, eventually, to social disorder. The promotion of active participation in civic, social, economic and political activities by individuals at both the local and national levels is essential for everyone in society and is an integral part of promoting social integration. Citizens and social groups should have opportunities and the capacity to participate in discussions relevant to their concerns.

65. Citizens' participation is not limited to taking part in periodic elections. People should be included at all levels of governance, including deliberations on the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies. Where there are barriers to such participation, including lack of financial resources or lack of information and incentives, support for consultative and oversight systems are needed. Capacity-building for local governments, voter education, information campaigns and awareness-raising among groups typically marginalized are especially important. With the proliferation of grass-roots movements, support for other institutions of civic engagement such as tenants' organizations, school governing bodies, advocacy groups and others should be strengthened as well, as they influence decision-making and the quality of local life. People also need to be assured that their participation will be protected and not lead to retribution against them.

66. Socially integrative strategies should build active and informed citizens. To be a citizen is to be a full member of a political community, with the rights and obligations related to such membership. The development of responsible citizenship is a good socially integrative strategy that not only enhances social capital and promotes government accountability, but also improves overall participation and inclusion. Consequently, it is important to promote educational systems and social institutions that cultivate good citizens, citizens who hold public officials accountable for their actions, demand social justice, accept people who are different and build solidarity with other members of the community and beyond. Teaching the value of responsible citizenship should be part of all school curricula and be actively included in policies relating to young people, through measures such as lowering the voting age, establishing youth councils and consultative bodies, military service, and national and community service.²⁹

67. To move towards the goal of social integration, broad-based participation and engagement on the part of diverse populations in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all areas are necessary. Inclusive policies alone will not automatically produce the expected impacts on the ground, however, and require an appropriate environment and mechanisms for implementation.

68. Citizen participation and engagement in general can have a considerable impact on the public policy discourse and the policies that are enacted. Even on issues with a high technical content, citizens can play an active role in choosing options through a transparent process. Citizen action can lead to highlighting social interests and goals and advance the overall common good.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

69. The goal of creating a "society for all" remains elusive, with many individuals and social groups continuing to face discrimination, subject to extreme poverty, barred from decent jobs, invisible, voiceless and excluded from decision-making processes. Deprivation in childhood, family disintegration, unemployment, lack of access to health care and education, inadequate housing, violence and crime are daily experiences for many people. Their experiences, and the underlying causes, are an indication that in most societies social integration remains unachieved.

70. In spite of the compelling vision proclaimed in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, social integration has not been well understood or effectively operationalized. Although frameworks have been adopted at the regional and national levels, there have been few attempts to mainstream social integration into national development planning. Since the World Summit for Social Development, several mandates have been established to address the situation of marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, older persons, young people and indigenous peoples. Normative frameworks, however, will not diminish discrimination, stereotyping, cultural biases, abuse and violence if they are not complemented by explicit policy measures and the strict enforcement of anti-discriminatory laws to remove barriers to social integration. The gap between the establishment of normative instruments and actual implementation has to be closed. Social integration is also more than the sum of a series of normative frameworks for specific social groups. A more analytical perspective, based on the assumption that issues of social inclusion cut across many groups, should emerge to guide further social integration efforts. There are no blueprints for successful social integration policies. Governments and all stakeholders will have to develop their own strategies, not only to tackle the most urgent manifestations of exclusion, but also to place them in the context of coherent policies that advance the broad social integration agenda. Such comprehensive, holistic and integrated policies should be based on the assumption that societies should reconcile market forces with a commitment to solidarity, mutual support, protection and empowerment of their members. The success of such strategies will depend on the political will, institutional capacity and strength of the alliances established to pursue this goal.

71. Economic growth alone will not lead to social integration. Unless the benefits of growth are distributed more equitably and the basic principles of social justice respected, growth may actually lead to increased inequality. To give meaning to social integration, policymakers should increase their understanding of the relationship between macroeconomic policies, external shocks and impacts on inequality, exclusion and vulnerability. National social policy does not happen in isolation. Global trends, economic policy, structural constraints and donors' expectations all influence national social policy. That is why the design of policies promoting social integration should be pursued within an international framework that is coherent, participatory and accountable, and whereby national priorities, the interests of the various stakeholders and international aid efforts are explicitly considered and integrated.

72. Since the obstacles to social inclusion lie in social, economic, political and cultural institutions and practices, long-term structural causes impeding social

integration should be recognized and addressed as a fundamental aspect of inclusive development. A broader vision of social policy is central to the advancement of inclusive development. Policies promoting social integration should include redistributive measures aimed at ensuring better access to universal basic services. They should encompass rights-based approaches, with special emphasis on anti-discrimination, participation and strategies to promote decent work. The objectives of social inclusion should be mainstreamed into existing policies and programmes, including regulatory framework and economic planning.

73. Inclusive development requires mechanisms that facilitate participation and partnership. Government entities such as social inclusion units and boards or community response task forces responsible for social integration should be established or strengthened. Policies enhancing broad-based and genuine participation and engagement of diverse populations in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all social, economic, political and cultural facets of life are of crucial importance. An inclusive approach, sometimes called a "whole of government" or "joined-up" approach, necessitates strong partnerships among all levels of Government, businesses and community organizations so as to address economic and social priorities and policies. Local government is key to the implementation of social integration policies and to the mobilization and coordination of actors at different levels. Commitment to policy is not the domain of Governments alone. A vibrant civil society and responsible private sector must have a stake in social integration and help build it.

74. Policy responses should also be evidence-based and subject to ongoing revision, based on monitoring. Evaluation frameworks, including specific indicators at the international and national levels, should be developed to assess progress and to identify gaps. Indicators should identify the nature of the problem, be statistically validated and provide feedback for policy interventions. They should also be measurable and comparable across countries, as well as disaggregated by gender, age and other characteristics. It must also be recognized that a fundamental source of evidence for social policy resides in social groups within communities. Evidence should be collected using participatory, qualitative methodologies that can provide insight into statistical data.

75. To make social integration central to the development agenda, it is necessary to acknowledge that working towards social integration goes beyond the implementation of group-specific mandates; it is central to fighting poverty and unemployment and creating a society for all, the ultimate goal of development. Social integration policies should serve as a tool that allows policymakers to address continuing economic and social crises. The recent global economic and social crises are a stark reminder that globalization and the increasing interdependence of societies call for bold social policy action and safeguards that seek to ensure that all people are integrated in and benefit from the process of global development.

B. Recommendations

76. **Social integration policies should be concomitantly pursued at the normative, institutional and programmatic levels. At the normative level, legal frameworks must ensure equal treatment of citizens, regardless of personal or**

group-based attributes. At the institutional level, Member States should create institutions that facilitate consultation with citizens in the development and implementation of social integration policies. At the programmatic level, specific policies should be designed to promote the integration of marginalized individuals and groups.

National level

77. Governments are encouraged to adopt a coherent approach to economic and social policymaking and to ensure accountability and transparency. Governments should enhance and institutionalize coordination in promoting the mainstreaming of social integration in all government ministries.

78. Social integration policies should be embedded in a human rights framework. Governments are encouraged to harmonize their national legislation with the international human rights instruments to which they are a party and enforce their implementation at the national and local levels. Barriers and obstacles to economic, social and civic participation must be identified and removed as a matter of priority.

79. Governments should ensure access to quality basic education for all and include multicultural, human rights and citizenship education to reduce discrimination, enable people to claim their rights and promote responsible citizenship. While basic education is crucial for laying the foundations required for social integration, it is insufficient for integration into the globalized economy. Emphasis should be given to expanding access to quality secondary education, particularly for girls and young women.

80. Governments should establish basic social protection schemes for both the formal and informal sectors so as to promote equity, inclusion, cohesion and stability in society. Social protection programmes should be designed to protect people throughout the life course, as well as to support the poor and most vulnerable, especially during periods of macroeconomic instability. All countries are encouraged to put in place a social protection floor.

81. Governments should pursue civic engagement and broad-based participation in the formulation and review of socio-economic policies and ensure that the views of all stakeholders are represented. To support an inclusive policy framework, all levels and departments of Government should integrate consultation and ongoing social dialogue with all stakeholders.

82. Governments should draw on existing instruments concerning social groups, notably the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to develop appropriate national policies and ensure their full implementation. To promote an inclusive approach, Governments are encouraged to conduct a joint review of the implementation of all social-group-related programmes and policies.

83. Governments are encouraged to develop national evaluation frameworks for social integration, including benchmarks and indicators.

International level

84. The United Nations system should continue to facilitate an exchange of experiences and good practices encompassing practical strategies to promote participation, anti-discrimination, redistribution and other measures that effectively operationalize social integration.

85. Member States and United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies should continue to support the Social Protection Floor Initiative as an effective tool for social integration. The manual and strategic framework for joint United Nations country operations that was developed through an inter-agency initiative should be fully utilized to enable the United Nations system to assist Member States, at their request, in designing basic social protection measures, taking into account national ownership and circumstances.

86. The international community is encouraged to reflect on the current mandates guiding action on the social inclusion of groups and consider the commonalities found between them in order to advance the full implementation of those mandates in a coordinated manner.



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Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 2009/20, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to be presented for consideration during the forty-eighth session of the Commission for Social Development, while also taking into consideration General Assembly resolution 62/179, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support". The present report reviews the state of progress in the implementation of NEPAD as well as its social dimensions within the context of the converging global food and energy crises, the financial and economic crisis and climate change.

* E/CN.5/2010/1.



I. Introduction

1. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) arose from the formal adoption of a strategic framework for the socio-economic development of Africa at the thirty-seventh Summit of the Organization for African Unity in July 2001, as a programme of that organization. NEPAD represents a common vision of African leaders and their firm conviction that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy.

2. NEPAD has been instrumental in identifying the region's key development priorities. It has also transformed the nature of the dialogue with Africa's development partners in both the developed and developing regions. This has led to the fostering of a sustainable development discourse that is based on mutual respect and accountability, close cooperation in the financing and implementation of major development projects and the addressing of new and emerging global challenges such as climate change, the food and energy crises and the global financial and economic crisis.

3. To promote implementation, an African Union/NEPAD African action plan was conceived in 2005-2006 and revised in 2009 by the African Union, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The key priorities of this plan include infrastructure; agriculture and food security; human resource development; science and technology; trade, industry, market access and private sector development; environment, climate change and tourism; governance and public administration; peace and security; and gender development.

4. By promoting investments in these priority areas, NEPAD aims to build African societies that are politically, economically and socially robust and inclusive and that also protect the environment. Investing in these areas offers African countries renewed hope and the opportunity to focus on the multidimensional needs of people living in poverty, particularly women and children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants and other socially disadvantaged groups.

5. Furthermore, NEPAD offers countries the opportunity to adopt and implement multisectoral policies that can enhance the voice, participation and empowerment of all members of society. These policies include increasing access to quality schools and affordable primary health care, essential agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers, water and sanitation, better roads and participation in local and national policymaking processes. In a broad sense, NEPAD provides a stronger foundation for poverty eradication and sustainable growth and development in Africa.

6. Since its inception in 2001, there has been visible progress in implementing NEPAD by both African Governments and their development partners. Progress has been made to strengthen regional integration efforts and boost the participation of Africa in the global economy. Efforts to improve governance have also gained steam. To complement these regional efforts, the international community has increased aid flows to Africa. According to preliminary estimates from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), aid to Africa totalled \$26 billion in 2008, of which \$22.5 billion went to sub-Saharan Africa.

7. These regional and international efforts are still not enough, however, to comprehensively address the continent's development challenges, including the goal

of achieving the Millennium Development Goal targets by 2015. Although African economies grew at close to 5 per cent over the past few years, this level of growth is still not high enough. More importantly, recent estimates point to sharp declines in economic performance among African economies as a result of the global financial and economic crisis. Declining growth has likely, but not unavoidable, negative implications for progress in social development given the constraints it will impose on the fiscal space of countries (see E/ECA/COE/28/6).

8. The present report examines progress in implementing the social dimensions of NEPAD and assesses the impact on social development of the converging global crises that have affected both developed and developing countries. These include the food and energy crises of 2007-2008, the current global financial and economic crisis and ongoing climate change.

II. Progress in promoting good governance and its social dimensions

9. NEPAD has set African countries on a quest for democracy and good governance. There is growing consensus in the region that sustainable human development is impossible under conditions of poor governance, corruption, persistent civil conflict or war.

10. By recognizing that peace, security and better governance are necessary for development, African States have committed themselves through NEPAD's African Peer Review Mechanism process, to strive for a culture of good governance and foster inclusive participation of the broad African citizenry in governance. Early results from these endeavours are encouraging.

11. As part of its support to NEPAD, ECA tracks the progress being made in this area through the publication of the *African Governance Report*. In its latest issue, ECA notes that Africa has made modest progress in improving political and economic governance.¹ Positive developments have occurred in areas such as peace and security, economic growth and improvements in the living standards of African people. Progressive gains have also been made in economic governance, public sector management, corporate governance and private sector development. Today's African economies are therefore better managed, with revenue mobilization, tax collection and budgetary management systems being strengthened.

12. In the area of peace and security, the number of African countries experiencing violent conflicts declined from about 14 during the 1990s to 7 in 2006.² This decline has been welcome news for a continent where development aspirations have on too many occasions been derailed by protracted and vicious civil conflicts and wars. Countries emerging from conflict situations, such as Liberia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, and their neighbours are consolidating the peace dividend, restoring

¹ See Economic Commission for Africa, *African Governance Report 2009*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009).

² African Development Bank, *African Development Report 2008/2009: Conflict Resolution, Peace and Reconstruction in Africa* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008).

governance structures and rebuilding public and private institutions that are essential in supporting development priorities.³

13. The 2009 *African Governance Report* also notes, however, that, within the past five years, African countries have recorded marginal progress on political governance. Although a number of Governments have made strides in enhancing political representation and competitive electoral politics, human rights and the rule of law, progress is still lacking in political party and electoral systems. To bolster the confidence of the people in the electoral process, Governments need to continue working to improve electoral processes. Gains in this area will also have positive incidental benefits in the social and economic spheres. One way to accomplish this would be to share national experiences and best practices through the African Peer Review Mechanism process. As at July 2009, 30 countries had acceded to the Mechanism,⁴ 12 countries had been peer reviewed and 16 other countries had launched the process by receiving support missions.

III. Progress in the social sectors

A. Poverty and hunger

14. According to recent World Bank estimates, the number of people living on less than \$1.25 a day in sub-Saharan Africa increased from 202 million in 1981 to 384 million in 2005. In relative terms, the percentage of people living below the poverty line hardly changed. It was 50.8 per cent in 1981 and 50.4 per cent in 2005. In contrast, absolute poverty fell globally, from 1.9 billion people in 1981 to 1.4 billion in 2005. Absolute poverty also fell in North Africa, from 8.8 million to 4.0 million people during the same period.⁵ In relative terms, poverty declined from 9.7 per cent to 2.7 per cent.

15. Although the absolute number of people living in extreme poverty in sub-Saharan Africa has gone up, this subregional trend disguises large differences among countries. For instance, the percentage of people living below the \$1.25 a day poverty line in 1981 varied from a low of 3.6 per cent in Gabon to a high of 89.9 per cent in Swaziland. In 2005, this pattern persisted, with extreme poverty remaining low in Gabon (4.8 per cent) but ranging to a high of 86.1 per cent in Liberia. Such wide differences among countries underscore the need to tackle extreme poverty through channels that recognize and address the specific needs of each country.

16. The increase in the number of people living below the poverty line in sub-Saharan Africa is primarily a result of the failure to achieve sustained and rapid economic growth and productive job creation. Efforts to reduce the number of people living in poverty have been undermined by the failure of many countries to

³ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery: Annual Report 2008* (New York, 2009).

⁴ These countries are Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia.

⁵ World Bank, PovCalNet, online database available from <http://iresearch.worldbank.org> (accessed 12 October 2009).

fundamentally change the structure of their economies and aggressively address worsening inequalities. Although resource-rich countries benefited from the recent boom in commodity prices and have gone on to record some of the highest economic performances in the world, these high rates of growth have not been accompanied by major declines in levels of poverty. For instance, the percentage of people living on less than \$1.25 a day in Nigeria jumped from 47.2 per cent in 1981 to 62.4 per cent in 2005. Hence, the goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015 will continue to be a major challenge across the region and will require sustained political leadership and resource commitment.

17. As regards hunger, the region has made some progress. In 2007 there were 236 million people who were chronically hungry. Overall, the proportion of people suffering from chronic hunger declined from 34 to 30 per cent between 1995-1997 and 2003-2005.⁶ The steepest reductions occurred in Ghana, the Congo, Nigeria, Mozambique and Malawi. Nevertheless, recent estimates by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) indicate that the number of food-insecure people in sub-Saharan Africa is projected to increase by 6 per cent as a result of the recent food and energy crises and the current global financial and economic crisis.⁷

18. To tackle the poverty challenge within the NEPAD framework, most Governments have launched broad anti-poverty strategies and have mainstreamed anti-poverty initiatives into the planning and implementation of programmes and budget processes. Furthermore, several African Peer Review Mechanism country review reports⁸ point out that the implementation of sound macroeconomic policies and a move towards rule-based institutions and participatory forms of government are yielding some positive results in the fight against poverty. These country reports also reveal, however, that efforts aimed at strengthening macroeconomic policies and rule-based institutions have been too modest and are therefore not putting a major dent in the continent's widespread poverty.

B. Education and health

19. To bridge the education gap between Africa and the rest of the world, as well as to achieve universal primary education, expand access to secondary education and close the gender gap in education within African Union member States, NEPAD's human resource development initiative has made some notable progress, with the support of international donor partners, the United Nations system and other multilateral institutions, with regard to school enrolment and retention and infrastructure development. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009*,⁹ sub-Saharan African countries spend, on average, about 4.4 per cent of their

⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008: High Food Prices and Food Security: Threats and Opportunities* (Rome, 2008).

⁷ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2009: Economic crises: impacts and lessons learned* (Rome, 2009).

⁸ African Peer Review Mechanism country review reports are available for the following countries: Algeria, Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda.

⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009: Overcoming Inequality: Why Governance Matters* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 368-370.

gross national product (GNP) on education. Public spending on education as a percentage of GNP increased in several countries, with sharp increases occurring in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and Senegal.¹⁰ The report also notes, however, that close to half of all low-income African countries spend less than 4 per cent of their national income on education.

20. Overall, rising public expenditure on education is contributing to higher levels of school enrolment for girls and boys, as well as higher literacy rates. According to the 2009 United Nations *Millennium Development Goals Report*,¹¹ primary enrolment increased by 15 percentage points between 2000 and 2007. Enrolment is only part of the picture, however. Many students drop out before completing their course of study. Two thirds of out-of-school children are not expected to ever enrol in school at all. There is increasing recognition that the quality of education is also a key part of the equation. Schools are chronically underfinanced and understaffed, and many people leave school without basic literacy skills. Trained teachers are in short supply, and UNESCO estimates that 3.8 million teachers will be needed in the region to reach the Millennium Development Goal on education.

21. As regards gender parity in enrolment, progress has also been made. In Northern Africa, gender parity improved from 90 to 94 girls per 100 boys, and, in sub-Saharan Africa, it increased from 85 to 90 girls per 100 boys between 1999 and 2007. Gender parity in secondary enrolment increased from 93 to 98 in Northern Africa but declined from 82 to 79 girls per 100 boys in sub-Saharan Africa. In higher education, girls outnumbered boys by 104 to 100 in Northern Africa in 2007, increasing from 68 in 1999. Sub-Saharan Africa has seen a slight decline in gender parity in higher education, from 69 to 67 girls per 100 boys.¹¹

22. Government actions to achieve education for all have resulted in an expansion of primary schools; however, this expansion in universal primary education has put pressure on Governments to expand secondary education and tertiary opportunities. Although African Governments initially sought to expand access to higher education through subsidized public institutions, most Governments have encouraged the establishment of private higher education institutions. As a result of these efforts, there were around 200 public and 468 private higher education institutions in Africa in 2009.¹²

23. In terms of improving access to primary health care, several countries continue to face serious challenges in mobilizing, allocating and managing financial resources in the face of increasing disease burdens. Consequently, weaknesses in the primary health-care system abound, and are reflected in poor health indicators across the region. For instance, life expectancy at birth in the African region is estimated by the World Health Organization to be only 52 years. Half of all maternal deaths still occur in sub-Saharan Africa, and there has been no measurable

¹⁰ According to the *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009*, total public expenditure on education as a percentage of GNP increased from 3.6 to 6.0 in Ethiopia, from 5.4 to 6.9 in Kenya, from 3.5 to 5.0 in Senegal between 1999 and 2006, and from 2.5 to 5.3 in Mozambique between 1999 and 2005.

¹¹ *Millennium Development Goals Report* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.I.12).

¹² N. V. Varghese, "Private sector as a partner in higher education development in Africa", policy brief prepared by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, the Working Group on Higher Education, the Association of African Universities (AAU) and the International Institute for Educational Planning at the request of AAU (UNESCO, 2009).

improvement since 1990. Child mortality rates remain high, with 145 deaths per 1,000 live births in sub-Saharan Africa. Nearly one out of seven children dies before his or her fifth birthday. Nevertheless, recent surveys indicate that some progress has been made in key interventions relevant for children's health. These include the provision of insecticide-treated bednets to fight malaria, exclusive breastfeeding, immunizations and wider availability of antiretroviral therapy to prevent the spread of HIV from mother to infant.

24. Malaria continues to be a major killer of children in sub-Saharan Africa. Progress has been made, however, as a result of programmes like the Roll Back Malaria Partnership's Global Malaria Action Plan and increasing global funding for key malaria interventions. Funding for malaria interventions increased from \$250 million in 2004 to \$700 million in 2007. Funding reached close to \$1.1 billion in 2008. World leaders continue to commit billions to malaria control efforts as evidenced at the September 2008 High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals. This increased commitment and action has resulted in dramatic increases in the number of children sleeping under insecticide-treated bednets, from 2 per cent in 2000 to 20 per cent in 2006.¹¹ In addition, the international community has committed \$3 billion to the new African Leaders Malaria Alliance, which was launched during the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. To reduce unnecessary malaria deaths, the Alliance aims to distribute more than 240 million insecticide-treated bednets throughout malaria-endemic countries across Africa by the end of 2010.

25. AIDS continues to be an important health priority in Africa. Despite a decline in the number of new HIV infections, from 2.3 million to 1.9 million between 2001 and 2008, sub-Saharan Africa remains the region by far most heavily affected by HIV/AIDS, accounting for 71 per cent of all new HIV infections in 2008. Improved access to antiretroviral therapy has helped to hold deaths resulting from AIDS constant at 1.4 million between 2001 and 2008 and has led to an increase in the number of people living with AIDS, as those infected with the virus live longer.¹³

26. Other areas of health have shown improvement. The percentage of children receiving measles immunization increased from 55 to 73 per cent between 2000 and 2007. Access to improved drinking water sources and sanitation also increased during 1990-2006, with most of the improvements occurring in rural areas.

IV. Promoting agricultural development

27. African countries continue to face significant challenges in strengthening agriculture for sustainable economic growth, the creation of productive jobs, and food and nutrition security. Some of these challenges are not new and include climate shocks such as droughts and floods, a lack of access to markets, civil conflicts and a lack of capacity to harness new agricultural knowledge and techniques that result in efficient production methods. The social consequences of neglecting agriculture across the region were dramatically highlighted by the food and energy crises of 2007-2008. To compound the situation, the current global economic crisis does not bode well for the agricultural growth prospects of Africa,

¹³ Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organization, *AIDS epidemic update 2009* (Geneva, 2009).

given that many Governments were already operating in an environment of limited public resources.

28. The agricultural sector has for many decades been given low resource allocation priority from both African Governments and the donor community, even during boom times. In most African countries, agriculture accounts for over 25 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) and 70 per cent of the labour force.¹⁴ Studies have shown that in some countries investments in agriculture have the largest positive effects on growth and poverty reduction (see table 1). The table shows that the relative growth and income returns on spending on agriculture were highest in Ghana, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. In contrast, investments in roads yielded the highest growth returns in Ethiopia. The negative growth return on spending in rural education in Ghana is attributed to rural-urban migration, which tends to be dominated by better-educated and skilled farmers. Overall, investments in the agricultural sector can reduce levels of extreme poverty by boosting agricultural productivity, which often leads to higher rural household incomes and reductions in food prices. Therefore, addressing inadequate Government spending as well as low official development assistance (ODA) flows to the agricultural sector and rural development should be a top priority of Governments and the donor community.

Table 1
Returns on public spending in Africa

Sector	Ghana	Uganda	United Republic of Tanzania	Ethiopia
Returns on agriculture or rural income (local currency/local currency spending)				
Agriculture	16.8	12.4	12.5	0.14
Education	(0.2)	7.2	9.0	0.56
Health	1.3	0.9	n.e.	(0.03)
Roads	8.8	2.7	9.1	4.22
Ranking in returns on poverty reduction				
Agriculture	n.e.	1	2	n.e.
Education	n.e.	3	1	n.e.
Health	n.e.	4	n.e.	n.e.
Roads	n.e.	2	3	n.e.

Source: Shenggen Fan, Tewodaj Mogues and Sam Benin, "Setting priorities for public spending for agricultural and rural development in Africa", International Food Policy Research Institute policy brief No. 12, April 2009.

Note: n.e. indicates not estimated.

29. Many African countries have not met the growth and spending targets of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, as outlined in the 2003 Maputo Declaration of the Assembly of the African Union. In this declaration, African Heads of State and Government agreed to allocate at least 10 per cent of their national budgets to agriculture. To date, only seven countries have reached this modest

¹⁴ Economic Commission for Africa/African Union, *Economic Report on Africa 2009: Developing African Agriculture through Regional Value Chains* (Addis Ababa, ECA, 2009).

target, while a majority of Governments are averaging only about 4.5 per cent. For instance, Mali allocated 14 per cent of its budget to agriculture in 2006, and Malawi allocated 12 per cent in 2006/07.¹⁵ Therefore, a large number of African countries still depend on ODA to fund agricultural development. This strategy is not sustainable given the unpredictability and volatility of aid flows. If African Governments are to enhance food production, reduce poverty and hunger and achieve the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme goal of agricultural growth of at least 6 per cent annually by 2015, they must reorient their budget priorities and enhance domestic resource mobilization efforts. To date, only Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal and the Gambia have surpassed the Programme threshold of 6 per cent agricultural growth in recent years.¹⁶

30. In a series of country case studies on agricultural growth and investment options for poverty reduction, the International Food Policy Research Institute has shown that it is possible for countries such as Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia to attain the Programme target of 6 per cent annual agricultural growth by 2015.¹⁷ To reach this target, however, these countries will require additional growth in all crops and subsectors, such as fisheries and livestock production. Reliance on a limited number of crops or on higher-value export crops will be insufficient. Rather, pursuing broad-based agricultural growth and allocating at least 10 per cent of public revenues to the agricultural sector will be important. In the long run, such investments will help spur broad-based economic growth, drive down the price of domestic food resources and improve both rural and urban incomes.

31. In an effort to support the development of sustainable agricultural systems in Africa and other low-income countries, leaders of the Group of Twenty (G-20) nations, at the conclusion of the Pittsburgh Summit, reiterated their commitment to scale up agricultural assistance to low-income countries through a multilateral trust fund. This trust fund would target programmes such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. In addition, some Governments have committed to increasing their support to African agriculture through the Programme. For instance, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has committed to increasing spending on agricultural development to £1.1 billion over the next three years as part of the Group of Eight's (G-8) \$20 billion financial commitment to global food production, while the United States of America (through its initiative to end hunger in Africa) is working with the African Union, NEPAD and other donor countries to support the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme agenda, as well to fulfil the Millennium Development Goal of cutting in half by 2015 the number of hungry people in Africa.

¹⁵ New Partnership for Africa's Development, "Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme 2007 annual report summary".

¹⁶ Shenggen Fan, Tewodaj Mogues and Sam Benin, "Setting priorities for public spending for agricultural and rural development in Africa", International Food Policy Research Institute policy brief No. 12, April 2009.

¹⁷ See International Food Policy Research Institute discussion papers 00791, 00794, 00784, 00790 and 00689.

V. Promoting infrastructure development and regional integration

32. Owing to infrastructure deficiencies, only one in four Africans has access to electricity, 31 per cent of the African population is using an improved sanitation facility, and 58 per cent of the population has access to an improved drinking water source. An even smaller proportion has access to all-weather roads. Hence, the lack of infrastructure services across the region poses severe constraints on economic growth, trade and regional integration. Investments in roads, electricity, telecommunications, information and communications technologies and water and sanitation are also important for social development, particularly poverty eradication and food security, in both rural and urban areas. Infrastructure development does have a significant positive impact on non-farm wages and employment opportunities.

33. Despite well-known positive incidental benefits associated with sustained investments in infrastructure, however, African Governments still spend a small share of national budgets on infrastructure. Public spending on transport and communications accounted for 6.3 per cent of total national budgets on average in 1980, 3.9 per cent in 2000, and 3.7 per cent in 2005.¹⁶ This trend can be attributed largely to the kind of structural adjustment programmes that they have pursued since the 1980s and that are aimed at reducing public debt and keeping inflation down to a very low level. Nevertheless, this policy framework did not increase private infrastructure investment as had been hoped in order to compensate for the reduction in public investment. It is this negative trend and low level of investment that NEPAD's infrastructure programme aims to reverse by underscoring that high and sustained Government budget allocations will be the main drivers of infrastructure development in Africa.

34. To address infrastructure deficiencies in the region, as well as the infrastructure gap between Africa and the rest of the world, a growing number of African countries have made considerable progress in utilizing NEPAD's infrastructure short-term action plan, as well as NEPAD's infrastructure project preparation facility, which is under the management of AfDB. The goal of this facility is to address infrastructure bottlenecks that have constituted a major handicap to the continent's improved productivity and competitiveness. To date, the Facility has mobilized close to \$1.6 billion to fund NEPAD infrastructure projects in the transport and energy sectors. These include the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa's regional communication telecommunication project, the Nigeria-Benin-Togo-Ghana electricity interconnection project, the Eastern Africa Submarine Cable System, a Kenya-Zambia electricity connectivity project, the construction of the Kenya-Ethiopia highway and the Kenya-Uganda oil pipeline. To sustain these efforts, AfDB in 2007 approved five regional projects under NEPAD, at a total cost of \$327 million. An additional \$4.2 billion was also approved by the NEPAD infrastructure project preparation facility special fund. These funds will be used to finance the preparation of seven projects in the energy, transport and communications sectors.

35. By boosting infrastructure financing, projects of this nature will in the long run enhance Africa's growth prospects, deepen regional economic integration, create decent job opportunities for scores of people and therefore contribute to poverty eradication efforts. In addition, improved access to local, regional and international

markets will, in the long run, attract investment capital by lowering the cost of doing business in Africa.

36. Nevertheless, the global crisis will affect infrastructure development and regional integration efforts in Africa because of declines in foreign direct investment (FDI). The crisis has altered the demand parameters for long-term financing of NEPAD infrastructure projects, which are key to fostering regional integration in Africa. Many public-private infrastructure development projects have been either scaled down or abandoned altogether because of huge budget deficits coupled with capital flight from emerging African economies. Hence, it will be much harder to raise the \$52.2 billion per year that the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group estimated would be required in public and private investment to address Africa's infrastructure deficiencies. African countries trying to implement NEPAD's infrastructure short-term action plan could be affected by the crisis through two main channels. First, many Governments and their private sector counterparts face diminished prospects of accessing finance, whether in international or domestic markets, as a result of the tightening of credit markets. Even if countries or private enterprises are able to access the finance, the cost of borrowing money is now much higher, if not prohibitive. Second, the global economic crisis has lowered Government revenues and corporate profits. This in turn has curtailed the ability or propensity of public-private partnerships to finance major projects.

VI. The global financial and economic crisis and priority areas of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

37. The region has not been spared from the effects of the slowdown in the global economy that has followed the banking crisis in advanced economies. Revenues from manufacturing, trade and tourism have plummeted in Africa's large and small economies as demand from developed countries for goods and tourism has sharply declined. Hence, there are growing concerns that the global financial and economic downturn will not only magnify lack of progress in key social sectors but will also reverse gains that had been made in some areas on a continent where many social indicators have been dismal for many years.

38. Recent projections by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs indicate that Africa's economic performance declined in 2008 and that the crisis will reduce growth in 2009 across the region by 2 to 4 percentage points. Before the crisis, economic growth in Africa had been over 5 per cent and had been projected to grow on average at a real GDP rate of 6.5 per cent. In addition, the relatively strong growth that the region had experienced in the recent past had not yet translated into productive job growth and poverty reduction on a wide scale given the rise in inequality and the narrow base of growth, concentrated mainly in the extractive primary and mineral sectors.

39. There are several channels through which the effects of the global crisis are being transmitted to African societies and are affecting their development priorities, such as those contained in NEPAD and other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

40. Before the global financial and economic crisis, global demand for African primary commodities had reached a historic peak. This boom in commodity demand

and prices played a critical role in boosting growth in the region. As a result, many countries managed to enlarge their fiscal space and domestic revenues, some of which funded major investments in agriculture, education, health and infrastructure projects. Now, however, not only has global demand for African commodities taken a plunge, owing to severe contractions in developed economies, but commodity prices have also fallen sharply. For instance, United Nations baseline scenario estimates indicate that growth in world gross product is expected to slow to 1.0 per cent in 2009 as compared with 2.5 per cent in 2008.¹⁸ Consequently, this projected rate of global growth will result in output growth in developing countries slowing from 5.9 per cent in 2008 to 4.6 per cent in 2009, while output in developed countries will decline by 0.5 per cent in 2009. Hence, the principal channel of transmission of the global crisis to African economies will be through weakened overall global demand for African commodities and low prices for most commodity exports. This will hamper GDP growth in many countries.

41. The second transmission channel is linked to the tightening of access to global credit facilities through increases in interest rates. For many African countries, raising the cost of borrowing money will choke off access to credit and increase the cost of servicing their external debt, which in many cases is pegged to the United States dollar. Raising the cost of credit will also limit the availability of trade finance and the flow of FDI to Africa as major investors seek safe investment havens, which are usually in advanced economies. According to the latest estimates from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, FDI flows to Africa reached a record high of \$88 billion in 2008, after six years of uninterrupted growth.¹⁹ A large share of this amount was directed to countries that produce natural resources and commodity-rich countries. FDI inflows in 2009 will likely fall, however, as a result of the financial and economic crisis continuing. Preliminary data shows that FDI inflows plunged by about 67 per cent in the first quarter of 2009. This drastic fall has major implications for infrastructure investments in Africa, given that FDI is a major contributor to gross fixed capital formation. It is important, however, to note that South-South FDI flows to Africa, particularly from China, India, Singapore, Malaysia and Brazil, have been on the rise and that this has helped to dampen to some extent the effects of contracting FDI flows from advanced economies.

42. Third, a significant economic slowdown of advanced economies might tempt some major donor countries to go back on the Monterrey Consensus commitment to provide 0.7 per cent of their gross national income (GNI) as aid to developing countries, as well as the commitments they made at the G-8 Summit at Gleneagles in 2005 to scale up assistance to Africa. Hence, the threat of major reductions in ODA flows to African countries will curtail the ability of Governments to spend on investments and social programmes that they perceive as important.

43. Fourth, remittances from the African diaspora will decline as many migrant workers in advanced and emerging economies are laid off. Severe reductions in remittances would have a negative impact on household consumption, children's schooling and health outcomes and the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises which contribute to job creation in many countries. The World Bank estimates that globally remittances will fall by 5 to 8 per cent in 2009 after growing

¹⁸ *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.II.C.2).

¹⁹ *World Investment Report 2009: Transnational Corporations, Agricultural Production and Development* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.II.D.15).

15 to 20 per cent per year from 2005 to 2007. Such a decline will have a negative impact on the economies of migrant-sending countries, since remittances constitute a large part of GDP for many countries. In Lesotho remittances constitute about 25 per cent of GDP. In countries such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Morocco, Nigeria and Senegal, remittances account for between 5 and 10 per cent of GDP. It is estimated that in Africa a 1 percentage point increase in the ratio of remittances to GDP is associated with a 0.29 per cent decline in the number of people living in poverty.²⁰

44. In terms of public expenditure on social sectors, the global crisis will likely not only squeeze the ability of African Governments to sustain the levels of investments they were able to make over the past few years but will also likely result in declines in public expenditure on social sectors as a percentage of GDP. Although it may be too early for the impact of the crisis to be reflected in spending on social sectors, a recent survey conducted by UNESCO²¹ to assess the impact of the crisis on public expenditure on education shows that, overall, African countries have not yet made drastic cuts in public expenditure as a percentage of GDP over the period 2008-2009. Of the 11 African countries that participated in this global UNESCO survey, public education expenditure was likely to decline in 2009 as compared with 2008 in only three countries: Cameroon, the Congo and the Sudan. In Kenya, public education expenditure in 2009 was likely to be lower than in 2007.

45. In Africa, the crisis is likely to add thousands of workers to the ranks of the working poor, as those who are losing jobs in the formal sector are trying to cope in the absence of any social protection by moving to the agricultural and informal sectors, where underemployment is widespread. The rate of working poverty in sub-Saharan Africa is projected to increase from 58.9 per cent in 2007 to as high as 67.9 per cent in 2009.²² There are also concerns that the crisis will increase rates of vulnerable employment in the region. The International Labour Organization projects that vulnerable employment will increase from 72.9 per cent in 2008 to 77.8 per cent in 2009 in sub-Saharan Africa and from 36.8 per cent in 2008 to 42.4 per cent in 2009 in North Africa.

46. The crisis has also created extraordinary hardship among people living in poverty and other vulnerable groups. FAO estimates that 265 million people in sub-Saharan Africa will suffer from undernourishment as a result of the fallout from the global economic crisis and the food and energy crises. Between 2007 and 2008, the food and energy crises alone pushed 115 million people into chronic poverty. FAO also warns that malnutrition may contribute to nearly half a million child deaths in the region in 2009, while a recent World Bank study predicts that between 30,000 and 50,000 infants are expected to die each year as a result of the crisis, with most of the deaths occurring among those living in poverty.²³

²⁰ John Anyanwu and Andrew Erhijakpor, "Do international remittances affect poverty in Africa?", AfDB paper.

²¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, "The impact of the crisis on public expenditure on education: findings from the UNESCO quick survey", paper No. 1 in a series of papers on the impact of the global financial and economic crisis on the education sector (Paris, 2009).

²² International Labour Organization, *Global employment trends: January 2009* (Geneva, 2009).

²³ Jed Friedman and Norbert Schady, "How many more infants are likely to die in Africa as a result of the global financial crisis?" World Bank policy research working paper No. 5023 (Washington, D. C., World Bank, 2009).

47. It is important to point out, however, that the depth and severity of the global crisis will vary among African countries given their different pre-existing vulnerabilities to external shocks of this magnitude. Hence, the capacity of each country to weather this storm depends on the production and export structure of each economy, exposure to the international financial system and whether countries had built sufficient foreign reserves to cushion the impact of the crisis. The amount of fiscal policy space to respond to the crisis through programmes such as fiscal stimulus packages is also important. The extent to which countries depend on external sources for budgetary support is equally important. For this reason, countries with strong fiscal positions, diversified economies and significant foreign currency reserves, and that do not receive large amounts of ODA to augment national budgets, are better positioned to dampen the impact of the crisis on their economies and on vulnerable populations such as women, children and the elderly.

48. For the majority of African countries left to address the global financial and economic crisis on their own, this will likely imperil prospects of meeting NEPAD goals and other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. This is largely because of resource constraints. Most African countries do not have sufficient resources to mount home-grown stimulus packages that can improve the flow of credit, boost demand or spur industrial growth (see table 2). Hence, lack of adequate capacity for countercyclical spending does not give Africa's already fragile industries any leverage that allows them to compete on a level playing field against competitors from advanced countries that have benefited from economic stimulus packages.

Table 2

Fiscal stimulus to address the global financial and economic crisis

	<i>Share of gross domestic product (percentage)</i>	<i>Fiscal stimulus (billions of United States dollars)</i>
Egypt	1.7	2.7
Kenya	1.0	0.3
Nigeria	0.8	1.6
South Africa	4.0	9.9
United Republic of Tanzania	6.9	1.3

Sources: Yanchun Zhang, Nina Thelen and Aparna Rao, "Social protection in fiscal stimulus packages: some evidence", United Nations Development Programme/Office of Development Studies working paper (New York, UNDP, 2009).

VII. Climate change and the social development priorities and goals of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

49. Under the African Union/NEPAD environment initiative, there is clear recognition of the need to address Africa's environmental challenges within the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. This concern is also in line with the Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development on Agriculture and Water in Africa, adopted by the Assembly of the African Union in 2004, the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, however, to the

negative impacts of the global financial and economic crisis and the food and energy crises, the problems of climate change are also undermining the implementation of the African Union/NEPAD environment initiative.

50. As recently noted by the summit on climate change convened by the Secretary-General in September 2009 and by the Africa Partnership Forum special session on climate change hosted by ECA in September 2009, climate change is already having a major impact on the ability of Africa to feed its people, protect them from the vagaries of nature, grow its economies and conserve its environment.

51. Although African countries contribute the least to climate change and sea-level rise, the continent is one of the major areas projected to bear the brunt of the impact, particularly in the form of threats of desertification, droughts, floods, diminished fresh water resources and other extreme weather phenomena. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicted that by 2020 between 75 and 250 million people in Africa would be exposed to heightened water stress and that, in some countries, crop yields from rain-fed agriculture could fall by up to 50 per cent as a result of climate change.²⁴ The report of the Intergovernmental Panel further predicted that low-lying coastal areas would be affected by sea-level rise towards the end of the twenty-first century, while the amount of arid and semi-arid land would increase by 5 to 8 per cent by 2080. Climate change may also result in an expansion of vector-borne disease transmission zones and declines in fisheries. Such potential developments pose an existential threat to the region.

52. Impacts of climate change across the region will likely compound the existing vulnerabilities of people living in poverty, such as extreme poverty and hunger. Other consequences include growing numbers of climate refugees, social disintegration as a result of social and political instability and conflicts over land-based resources, and new health threats that emerge as a result of the changing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as floods and droughts. As recent events have shown, many countries in East and West Africa have been devastated by droughts and floods. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that in 2008 close to 697,000 people were evacuated as a result of sudden-onset disasters in the region.

53. Africa should be given a chance to grow its economy without harming the environment. Investing in renewable energy and clean energy technologies will not only help Africa address the challenge of climate change but will also give it the opportunity to create new jobs and industries. Yet Africa cannot meet the climate challenge and its impact on human well-being alone. For Africa to leapfrog dirty energy solutions, strengthen its adaptive capacity and pursue sustainable low-carbon growth strategies, it will need financial assistance and technology transfers. The region will need not only additional funding but also timely and predictable delivery on existing ODA commitments.

54. To reverse key environmental changes that directly affect the livelihoods of people, African Governments have partnered with the European Union, United Nations Environment Programme, AfDB, regional economic communities and local

²⁴ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, M. L. Parry and others, eds. (Cambridge, United Kingdom, and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007).

communities to implement projects such as the "Congo basin convergence plan on forests" and the African Union/NEPAD "Green wall for the Sahara" initiative.²⁵ The objective of these initiatives is to contribute to sustainable and improved management of forest resources and protected areas and to build a "green wall" of trees across the Sahara to push back desertification and to improve agriculture and the livelihoods of people living in the Sahara and Sahel zones of Africa. These massive conservation and afforestation projects will not only create a buffer that will protect vulnerable populations from the effects of climate change but will also create jobs and therefore help countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The initial two-year phase of the "Green wall" initiative was formally approved by the Community of Sahel-Saharan States in Benin in 2008 and will result in the planting of a belt of trees that is 7,000 km long and 15 km wide at a cost of \$3 million.

VIII. Building alliances to enhance the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

55. To strengthen the social dimensions of NEPAD requires that the capacity and resources to implement its various multisectoral projects exist. Enhanced partnerships and coordination among donor Governments, the private sector, civil society and philanthropic organizations on agreed NEPAD priorities will help infuse the continent with direct investment, ODA and necessary technology transfers. Left alone, African Governments do not have the requisite financial and human resources to successfully implement all NEPAD priority areas. Therefore, there is a need for stronger, more effective and better-supported partnerships for Africa's development. Developed countries will need to fulfil their aid commitments and take concrete actions to reach the ODA target of 0.7 per cent of GNI. There is also need to address the conditionality, unpredictability and earmarking of ODA, which remain as key challenges to ensuring aid effectiveness.

56. To date, a growing number of African countries have worked closely with major development agencies to align agricultural strategies and investment mechanisms. These efforts have, for example, resulted in the alignment of the World Bank's African agriculture strategy with the pillars of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. There has also been a renewed emphasis on supporting African agriculture by countries such as Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. To ensure success, however, such partnerships should aim to foster national ownership of country programmes.

57. To support development projects that address gender concerns in Africa, such as the gender dimension of poverty, and HIV/AIDS, the Government of Spain and NEPAD signed a five-year agreement worth €50 million for the implementation of the NEPAD Spanish Fund for African Women Empowerment. This Fund, which became functional in May 2008, provides grants to projects in Africa. To date, the Fund has disbursed €6.2 million to 46 projects in 23 countries.

58. Partnerships are also playing a critical role in deepening regional integration in Africa through improvements in infrastructure. For instance, the NEPAD infrastructure plan is supported by AfDB, the World Bank (through the Africa action

²⁵ The initiative will be implemented in the countries of the Sahara and Sahel zones of Africa.

plan), the European Union-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure and the G-8 Infrastructure Consortium for Africa. AfDB, which houses the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, has devoted 60 per cent of its \$8.9 billion soft loan resources for 2008-2010 to building and rehabilitating infrastructure projects across the continent. The European Union has also come up with a new strategy for the region that aims to facilitate interconnectivity at the continental level by addressing missing links in existing networks and harmonizing transport policies across the continent. Major international donor agencies such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the United Kingdom Department for International Development are also actively working to improve road safety and trade facilitation along regional transport corridors.

59. In the health sector, partnerships continue to play a critical role in addressing significant financing gaps. For instance, the United States recently announced a six-year, \$63 billion global health initiative as its contribution to the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The European Union also continues to be the largest health donor to Africa and is committed to channelling to Africa at least 50 per cent of its overall collective ODA target of 0.56 per cent of GNI by 2010 and 0.7 per cent of GNI by 2015. Japan is also assisting countries such as Eritrea, the Gambia, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Zambia to reduce morbidity and mortality through the Roll Back Malaria initiative.

60. In the area of education, 22 African countries have joined the Education for All-Fast Track Initiative, which was started in 2002 as a global compact between low-income countries and donor nations to help poor countries achieve the education Millennium Development Goals. Hence, the commitment made by the 2009 G-8 Summit leaders in L'Aquila, Italy, to support education initiatives is highly commendable. Furthermore, the African Union's social policy framework for Africa calls for the strengthening of partnerships with donor countries, civil society organizations, the private sector and philanthropic organizations.

61. Within the framework of South-South cooperation, significant investments are being made in Africa in accordance with the development priorities of the continent. Countries such as China, India and Singapore have scaled up investments in infrastructure development, information and communications technologies, agriculture, gender mainstreaming, capacity-building, technical cooperation, public health and environmental protection. Major efforts have also been made to boost trade relations between Africa and emerging economies as well as with other developing countries. These efforts have, for instance, seen India's trade with Africa reach \$36 billion in 2008-2009 and Africa's trade with China reach a record of \$107 billion in 2008.

IX. Conclusions and recommendations

62. Owing to the global crises, gains in well-being that had been made as a result of improved economic performance are likely to be lost, undoing advances made over the past decade. For Africa, adverse social consequences are likely to remain for much longer, even after the recovery gathers pace in advanced economies. The lack of public social safety nets to offset the negative impact of a global recession on individuals and families will likely compound the situation, with the working poor and other vulnerable groups bearing the brunt of the global crises. Therefore, it

is more likely that African countries will be the last to come out of these global crises and might find themselves in a worse-off position after the global recovery as compared with the conditions they enjoyed before them. Consequently, African economies will likely experience decelerated growth, high unemployment and poverty rates and diminished prospects for achieving NEPAD goals and other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

63. For African countries to ensure that they bear the most responsibility for their own development, they should continue to integrate and mainstream NEPAD priorities into national development plans. They should also continue to strengthen efforts aimed at enhancing human capabilities and institutional capacity for effective and efficient programme conceptualization, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. These efforts should be enhanced through sharing of North-South and South-South regional experiences and best practices.

64. To effectively manage the process of development as envisioned by NEPAD, African countries need to strengthen institutions that address a broad set of policies or tasks and not focus on strengthening highly restrained, market-oriented institutions. Less restrained public institutions will help countries configure the policies that will work best under their respective national conditions. The role of the State is key in this regard, as underscored by the current global financial and economic crisis.

65. Africa's development partners should continue to integrate NEPAD priorities, values and principles into their development assistance programmes.

66. African countries and their development partners should place people at the centre of Government development action and secure core investment spending in health, education and social safety nets, such as school feeding programmes, in order to limit the threats of the global slowdown on key social sectors.

67. Proven initiatives in education, health, gender, sustainable agriculture, energy and infrastructure, such as the Education for All-Fast Track Initiative, should be scaled up and fully funded.

68. The international community should assist African countries in addressing the challenge of climate change by raising the resources needed to support adaptation and mitigation action.



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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
review of the relevant United Nations plans and programmes
of action pertaining to the situation of social groups**

Further implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, which is submitted in response to resolution 47/3 of the Commission for Social Development, presents the priorities of Member States for the coming years and sets out their views on mechanisms for improving the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, as well as options for future modalities for the review and appraisal process.

* E/CN.5/2010/1.



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Overview of the modalities and findings of the first review and appraisal	3
III. Priorities for implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 ...	6
IV. Procedures and suggested calendar for the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action	9
V. Conclusion and recommendations	11
Annexes	
I. Selected additional comments and clarifications by Member States and Permanent Observers regarding the priorities for the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, including whether the implementation of the Plan could be strengthened if the rights of older persons were recognized as one of the priority themes	12
II. Selected additional comments and clarifications provided by Member States regarding the procedure to be adopted for the second cycle of review and appraisal	16

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 47/3, the Commission for Social Development invited Member States to determine their priorities for the coming years by, inter alia, building on achievements identified during the first review and appraisal process, while paying special attention to areas where shortcomings were identified. The present report is submitted in response to that request. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States regarding mechanisms for improving the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002,¹ and options for future modalities for its review and appraisal, including on the basis of the previous report of the Secretary-General.²

2. Section II of the present report includes a brief summary of the major findings of the first review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, conducted by the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth and forty-sixth sessions in 2007 and 2008. The report also contains a summary of responses from Member States and Permanent Observers to a note verbale and statements made in the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. Additional information was provided by focal points on ageing in United Nations regional commissions. The report also considers discussions and developments at the intergovernmental level regarding future priorities in the field of ageing, including the possible format for the second review and appraisal exercise in 2012.

II. Overview of the modalities and findings of the first review and appraisal

3. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, identified the Commission for Social Development as the intergovernmental body responsible for the overall review and appraisal of its implementation. At its forty-first session, in February 2003, the Commission agreed to adopt a bottom-up narrative approach to review and appraisal. In its resolution 44/1, the Commission invited all major stakeholders, including civil society, to participate in the review and appraisal and to contribute to its various activities and events. Member States were invited to undertake an initial identification of actions taken since the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002 and to identify specific areas for in-depth participatory inquiries. At its forty-fourth session, in February 2006, the Commission adopted procedures and a calendar for the first review and appraisal cycle. Following participatory consultations at the national level, the approach called for a sharing of experiences among Governments at regional gatherings organized by the United Nations regional commissions. Member States were invited to include both ageing-specific policies and ageing-mainstreaming efforts in their reporting.

4. The regional findings contributed to the overall review and appraisal exercises conducted by the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth and forty-sixth sessions in 2007 and 2008, respectively. The format included a plenary debate and a series of panel discussions and events related to the theme "Addressing the challenges and opportunities of ageing". The Executive Secretaries of the United

¹ *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8-12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution I, annex II.

² E/CN.5/2009/5.

Nations regional commissions presented the findings of their respective meetings. Member States also forwarded 65 reports on national implementation. They provided information on both successes achieved and obstacles encountered by Governments in implementing the Plan and gave a panoramic overview of national policy priorities.³ The outcome of the review was set forth in Commission resolution 46/1.

5. Through the process of review and appraisal, Member States identified various priority issues and described strategies and policies in response to the demographic ageing of their societies. As described in the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-seventh session,² common priorities in all regions included: (a) establishing sustainable systems of social protection; (b) encouraging the participation of older persons in the labour market; (c) meeting the growing demand for quality and accessible health care in general and long-term care in particular and; (d) guaranteeing the rights and participation of older persons in society.

6. The need to develop, strengthen or preserve systems of social protection for older persons was identified as a common pressing issue. Historically, most developed countries have provided universal pensions and a basic floor of benefits and services. The current concern is to ensure the integrity and financial viability of those systems for future generations. In developing countries, many older persons no longer can rely on support provided by families, and efforts are under way to extend social protection from a small base that generally covers only workers in the formal sector. Evidence shows that coverage is generally low, payment levels are often inadequate to cover needs, and pensions are rarely indexed to inflation, which means that they lose value over time. With the numbers of older women and older persons who live alone continuing to grow, ensuring the adequacy of pensions has taken on increasing importance. In a growing number of developing countries, social (non-contributory and both universal and means-tested) pensions have been introduced and contribute substantially to reducing poverty rates among older persons.

7. Population ageing has a major impact on the structure and composition of the labour force. Countries with low fertility rates, whether developed or developing, have already experienced the early effects of the ageing of the workforce. Policies that encouraged early retirement in order to expand employment opportunities for younger workers are being reconsidered as life expectancy continues to increase and concerns over pension commitments and sustainability mount. Considerations include raising the retirement age (or eligibility for full pension benefits) and indexing programmes to changes in life expectancy or the old-age dependency ratio. As more older people continue to work longer, concern has also grown over the possibility that existing skills will fall short of requirements, particularly in the application of new technologies. Efforts are being made to expand opportunities for older workers to participate in lifelong learning and on-the-job training programmes. In many developing countries, employment often provides the sole source of income for older persons. The majority of men aged 65 and older in the least developed countries continue to work.⁴ A major challenge is to create or

³ For detailed analysis and results of the first review and appraisal see E/CN.5/2008/2, E/CN.5/2008/7 and A/63/95.

⁴ *World Economic and Social Survey 2007: Development in an Ageing World* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 07.II.C.1).

expand social pension schemes to support those workers and to enable them to retire with dignity and security. In all countries, consensus is growing that older workers who wish to remain active in the labour market should be encouraged and enabled to do so.

8. Globally, as more people can expect to live longer lives, public health sectors are challenged to ensure access to affordable, quality health and care services. Quality health care integrates preventive, curative and rehabilitative measures within a continuum of services, including palliative care. Enhanced training in geriatrics is required to ensure that services are appropriate to the needs of older persons. Increasing the focus on preventive medicine within a continuum of care can also help to control rising health-care expenditures, delay the onset of disabilities and reduce the need for long-term care.

9. Support for caregivers, particularly family caregivers, is increasingly recognized as a priority since, in most countries, families continue to provide the overwhelming proportion of daily care to older members. It is generally accepted that institutionalization is a less desirable, although sometimes necessary, option for providing care to older persons. "Ageing in place", whereby communities, voluntary organizations and Governments assist family caregivers in providing services in the home and community, is considered an attractive and viable option. Adapting environments to support older persons with housing and transportation is also essential to promote ageing in place and to reduce the need for institutionalization. Adjustments to infrastructure and the built environment, particularly the use of universal design concepts that reduce physical barriers and promote accessibility for all, will enable older persons to stay in their homes and accustomed environments longer. Such efforts prove less costly but require extensive coordination and time, and the extent of support remains limited. With expected increases in the number of very old people, who are at greatest risk of dependence, greater attention to requirements for care and how it can best be provided will be urgently needed.

10. Confronting age-based discrimination and promoting the empowerment of older persons are fundamental to ensuring their continued participation in society and greater respect for their rights. Some Member States have adjusted their domestic legal frameworks to better promote and protect the rights of older persons, through the promulgation of special rules and regulations. Some have also developed advocacy, training and intergenerational education programmes. Negative stereotypes of ageing and older persons persist, however, and can reinforce their feelings of inferiority as well as their ability to participate in society; greater, sustained efforts are required to overcome them. Because older persons do not form a homogeneous group (in terms of poverty level, physical independence and support needed), and because they are traditionally not well-organized or well-informed, especially in developing countries, special efforts may be required to promote and sustain their participation. Older persons should be encouraged to be actively involved in developing and implementing policies that directly affect their well-being, including through participation in associations that help to articulate their concerns and affirm their rights. They may be empowered through initiatives that allow them to share their knowledge and skills with younger generations. Older persons can also represent powerful voting blocks in countries where their political participation remains high.

11. Recently, efforts to codify the rights of older persons have gained support in some countries and regions. The empowerment and participation of older persons in society is a fundamental concern of the Madrid Plan of Action; empowerment and the realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all older persons are among the 11 central themes of the Plan of Action.⁵ Human rights, participation and empowerment are closely linked: the rights of older persons cannot be approached solely as a judicial or legal issue. Participation and empowerment are essential to claiming rights. Empowering older persons requires more than simply asking their opinions; it calls for their meaningful participation and engagement in decision-making. Evidence from around the world suggests that international and constitutional human rights instruments are not always sufficient to guarantee the fulfilment of rights.⁶ Unless there are sufficient and appropriate mechanisms for exercising rights, they may remain unfulfilled. When older persons are marginalized and lack access to information, they may become further disempowered. Empowering older persons will not only benefit them, but will also benefit the rest of society, as they are enabled to remain productive and contributing citizens.

III. Priorities for implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

12. The views of Member States and Permanent Observers on how to improve the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action were sought by means of a note verbale dated 7 July 2009. To date, 55 replies have been received.⁷ Respondents were invited to provide views on whether implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action could be strengthened if the rights of older persons were recognized as one of the priority themes. They were further requested to consider various approaches for promoting that priority. Respondents were also invited to provide views on the procedure for the future review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action. The United Nations regional commissions were also invited to provide input.

13. In their responses and additional comments, Member States and Permanent Observers indicated continued support for the 11 central themes and the framework contained in the Madrid Plan of Action. These include, inter alia, the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of older persons; the empowerment of older persons to fully and effectively participate; opportunities for individual development, self-fulfilment and well-being throughout life; the full enjoyment of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights and the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against older persons; the importance of families, intergenerational interdependence and solidarity for social development. The Plan of

⁵ *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8-12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution I, annex II, paras. 12 (a) and (c).

⁶ HelpAge International, "Why it's time for a convention on the rights of older persons", London, 2009.

⁷ Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Ecuador, Fiji, Finland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Greece, Iraq, Lebanon, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Namibia, New Zealand, Oman, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Permanent Observer of the Holy See and Permanent Observer of Palestine.

Action emphasized that the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, are essential for the creation of an inclusive society for all ages. Of the 55 respondents, 50 agreed that the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action could be strengthened if the rights of older persons were recognized as one of the priority themes. A few stated that the Madrid Plan of Action is a commitment to promote the rights of older persons and emphasized the importance of the right to development, while another indicated that the rights of older persons are actually an overall reference framework for the development and implementation of all priority themes on ageing.

14. Many respondents recognized that large numbers of older persons continue to be marginalized, both economically and socially. One noted that this may be because the approach to ageing remains essentially "welfarist" and that that approach has had a negative effect on the issue of the rights of older persons. Some Member States indicated that a focus on rights would facilitate the development of specific initiatives to support the independence and empowerment of older persons. This included the right to work and contribute to society; they might also more readily address specific problems of abuse, neglect, discrimination and violence. A large number were particularly concerned about social inclusion, social cohesion, intergenerational solidarity and building a society for all ages. They viewed a focus on the rights of older persons as a way to achieve those goals. One response noted that the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities showed that human rights and social development are complementary approaches which assist in addressing major social challenges. Furthermore, addressing ageing without promoting the rights of older persons will lead to their further marginalization and disempowerment in society.

15. In summary, there was near universal support for ensuring that the human rights of older persons are promoted and protected; however, further discussion is required on the most appropriate way to ensure that protection. The Economic Commission for Europe pointed out that the first review and appraisal in that region concluded that older persons have the same rights as any other age group and that talking about the rights of older persons suggests that they are a distinct, homogeneous special group that needs rights that are not applicable to people of other ages. To focus on rights would divert attention from ageing-specific policies needed to improve the quality of life of older persons. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean noted that articles 25 and 26 of the Brasilia Declaration, adopted in 2007 at the Second Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean: towards a society for all ages and rights-based social protection; state that signatories pledged to consult with their Governments to promote the drafting of a convention on the rights of older people. A series of follow-up regional meetings were convened to further explore the issue. Steps were being taken by some Member States in the region to consider the development of a regional convention, through the Organization of American States.

16. Several Member States indicated that they have well-developed national anti-discrimination legislation. Regional instruments also exist, although these may focus on different implementation priorities for the Madrid Plan, particularly intergenerational solidarity and mainstreaming efforts. It was indicated that 2012 will be the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity. Several European countries referred to the regional implementation strategy of the

Economic Commission for Europe, adopted after the Madrid Second World Assembly on Ageing, as the particular focus of their efforts.

17. The respondents that agreed with the idea of focusing the priority theme for implementation of the Madrid Plan on the rights of older persons were requested to consider the preferred approach for doing so. The note verbale suggested specific approaches: (a) appointing a special rapporteur on the rights of older persons; (b) establishing a working group on older persons and ageing at the regular sessions of the Commission for Social Development; (c) developing a new legal mechanism, such as a convention on the rights of older persons or; (d) another approach, which Member States could elaborate on. A wide range of views was expressed concerning methodology, objectives and combinations of the suggested approaches.

18. The appointment of a special rapporteur on the rights of older persons as a single choice drew support from four respondents for a variety of reasons. Respondents generally took one of three positions on the role of a special rapporteur: (a) to advocate and serve as a "watchdog", promote respect for the rights of older persons and raise awareness of ageing and the Madrid Plan of Action; (b) to provide technical assistance to help Member States to implement the Madrid Plan, monitor its implementation and contribute to preparing the second review and appraisal exercise in 2012 or; (c) to study the rights of older persons, establish dialogue with Member States on rights and on improving the situation of older persons, and seek consensus on whether or not a convention is needed. It should be noted that the note verbale made no reference to the body that should appoint a rapporteur; one response suggested that the appropriate body would be the Human Rights Council.

19. Thirteen respondents made a single choice in favour of the establishment of a working group to meet during regular sessions of the Commission for Social Development. A few responses indicated that the group could serve as a forum to discuss the situation of older persons, determine priorities for action, share best practices and coordinate policy. Others suggested it could function as a forum for Member States to discuss the promotion of the rights of older persons, the empowerment of older persons and the sensitization of public opinion. Some respondents saw the working group as a forum for moving towards a convention, either through discussion or launching a feasibility study on a possible legal instrument.

20. The responses of the 14 that chose the development of a new legal instrument or convention on the rights of older persons as their single choice focused on several aspects. Some identified a normative gap in existing human rights instruments relating to older persons and suggested that a new legal instrument would serve to complement and build upon existing legislation. Others emphasized that a new legal instrument would encourage Member States and the international community to take more concerted action on giving priority to issues of ageing and older persons. The monitoring and accountability involved in implementing such a convention would be of particular benefit.

21. Nineteen respondents selected a combination of the three approaches or an alternative approach, which are not, in fact, mutually exclusive. They expressed the view that combining approaches could assist both Member States and the Commission for Social Development in drawing attention to the issues of ageing and older persons and in taking further action on their behalf, while allowing

ongoing deliberation on the possible development of a convention. An overall analysis of the responses received indicates that the majority of respondents favour focusing the future implementation of the Madrid Plan on the priority theme of the rights of older persons; however, they also consider it necessary to devote additional time to discussing the benefits and drawbacks of the different approaches to doing so.

22. Further clarification is provided in the comments of Member States and Permanent Observers on the various options, contained in annex I of the present report.

IV. Procedures and suggested calendar for the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action

23. The aforementioned note verbale also sought responses from Member States and Observers to four options proposed by the Secretariat for the second cycle of review and appraisal. The four, non-exclusive procedures suggested were: (a) Governments would complete a questionnaire sent by the Secretariat; (b) an open method of coordination would be adopted;⁸ (c) national review and appraisal would be undertaken at the discretion of Governments, with analysis and consolidation of national findings at the regional level at forums (ministerial conferences, seminars, etc.) organized by the United Nations regional commissions, and further analysis and consolidation of regional findings at the global level undertaken by the Commission for Social Development, using a procedure similar to the one adopted for the first review and appraisal and; (d) a special rapporteur would be appointed to monitor the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. Member States and Permanent Observers were also invited to submit proposals of their own.

24. Thirteen respondents preferred to complete questionnaires; 20 opted for the open method of coordination; 27 recommended maintaining the modalities of the first review and appraisal; and 10 recommended appointing a special rapporteur to monitor the implementation of the Madrid Plan. The numbers indicate that the majority prefer to continue the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid Plan as conducted in 2007/2008, with more emphasis on an open method of coordination. It should be noted that some chose more than one option. Further clarification was provided in the comments of Member States and Permanent Observers on the various options, contained in annex II of the present report.

25. Combining the procedure followed for the first review and appraisal with the open method of coordination could provide a balance between a narrative, bottom-up participatory approach and an approach favouring the collection of quantitative data. This could be enhanced through the elaboration of benchmarks and indicators

⁸ The open method rests on mechanisms such as guidelines, benchmarking and sharing of best practices. After specific benchmarks and indicators to measure best practice are agreed upon, results are monitored and evaluated. United Nations publications *Guidelines for review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing* and *Guide to the National Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing* serve as blueprints for this method of policy evaluation.

at the regional level and could lead to a more comprehensive second review cycle. The indicators listed in the *Guidelines for review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing*⁹ might provide a basis for further discussion, although they would have to reflect differing regional policy priorities.

26. Given that the second cycle of review and appraisal would need to begin soon, it is important that the Commission consider establishing the overall calendar. Following the approach adopted for the first review cycle, the second cycle would likely conclude with a global review exercise conducted in the context of the Commission for Social Development at its fiftieth session in early 2012. If that assumption is correct, the following calendar may be proposed:

(a) The Commission for Social Development would decide on the timing, modalities and theme for the second review and appraisal at its forty-eighth session, in 2010;

(b) During 2010, Member States would determine their priorities for review and appraisal and undertake an assessment, including identifying laws and implementing regulations, institutions, policies and programmes introduced or altered since 2007/2008, in response to the Madrid Plan of Action. Countries would also review the national ageing situation. In so doing, each country would have identified the specific areas for participatory inquiries by the end of 2010;

(c) Also during 2010, deliberations would be conducted by the United Nations regional commissions to determine specific benchmarks and indicators to measure best practices, according to the open method of coordination;

(d) Member States would present their priorities to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-ninth session, in 2011;

(e) National and regional processes of review and appraisal would begin thereafter. Countries would review and appraise the national policies and strategies previously identified. Upon request, the regional commissions, in cooperation with other entities, would assist countries in conducting national activities;

(f) Information on the initial experience and good practices in organizing and conducting bottom-up participatory evaluations at the local and national levels would also be collected, analysed and presented to the regional commissions;

(g) During the second half of 2011, regional commissions would convene regional conferences, pending availability of sufficient resources, to consider the findings of the national reviews, share experiences and good practices and identify priorities for future action. The regional commissions would submit the conclusions of these review and appraisal conferences and individual national reports to the Commission for Social Development in 2012;

(h) The Commission would conduct, at its fiftieth session in February 2012, the global segment of the second cycle of review and appraisal. The modalities of review could include a general debate in plenary combined with discussions at a series of round tables on selected priority topics. A series of parallel events, including panels, workshops and seminars organized by stakeholders, could also be conducted. The conclusions of the second review and appraisal cycle, including any

⁹ <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/documents/MIPAA/GuidelinesAgeingfinal13%20Dec2006.pdf>.

new priorities, emerging issues and related policy options, would be contained in the Commission's report on its fiftieth session.

V. Conclusion and recommendations

27. There appears to be considerable interest within the international community in further exploring the human rights dimension of ageing, to improve the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action at all levels. It is also clear that Member States, while expressing agreement with the modalities of the first review and appraisal of the Plan of Action, would like, according to their particular circumstances, greater flexibility in the methodology used to complete the second review and appraisal cycle. A significant number of countries also expressed interest in strengthening the second cycle by adopting an open method of coordination.
28. With regard to the preferred approach for strengthening the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, Member States may wish to establish a working group within the regular sessions of the Commission for Social Development, to further pursue discussions on the most appropriate ways and means of promoting and protecting human rights for older persons.
29. Concerning the procedure to be adopted for the second cycle of review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid Plan, Member States may wish to decide that the second review and appraisal follow the set procedure of the first review and appraisal exercise, combined with the open method of coordination.
30. In addition, Member States may wish to consider the calendar proposed in this report and delineate the timeline for activities at all levels, concluding with the global review in the Commission for Social Development, at its fiftieth session in 2012.
31. Member States may wish to consider adopting the theme "Empowerment, protection and promotion of human rights for older persons" for the second review and appraisal cycle.

Annex I

Selected additional comments and clarifications by Member States and Permanent Observers regarding the priorities for the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, including whether the implementation of the Plan could be strengthened if the rights of older persons were recognized as one of the priority themes

1. In general, Member States and Permanent Observers considered that the Madrid Plan is based on the recognition of the rights of older persons. Some pointed to a growing concern about the vulnerable situation of older persons in many countries, including their inability to exercise and claim their rights. Ecuador noted that the promotion, protection and defence of the human rights of older persons are a fundamental prerequisite to the construction of a more just society. Brazil stated that older persons have special needs and vulnerabilities that are not adequately covered under existing human rights instruments and that the Madrid Plan could provide a basis for the formulation and implementation of national and international public policies from a human rights perspective. The Philippines, while agreeing that the human rights of older persons are a priority, stated that human rights should not be just one priority theme but an overall reference framework in the development and implementation of all priority themes.

2. Panama sees the Madrid Plan of Action as an international commitment to protect the rights of older persons and has acted accordingly in the development of its national legislation. Spain noted that the recognition of the rights of older persons is a step forward in improving the protection of their rights. Tunisia noted that recognition of the rights of older persons enables Governments to move ahead in developing legislation, with the requisite budgets for strategies and programmes, that will promote social cohesion. Greece believes that the Madrid Plan of Action is not just a text but a philosophy and the cornerstone to building a society for all ages. Cyprus stated that the focus on human rights will lead to a more holistic approach to the implementation of the Madrid Plan. Oman said that a focus on human rights would lead to the provision of the facilities necessary for the promotion of social integration. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia supported a focus on human rights as a priority issue, but also mentioned the issue of the empowerment of older persons and other priorities mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General on the further implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: strategic implementation framework.^a Burkina Faso sees the focus on human rights as an opportunity to move beyond generalities and to address specific issues for older persons. In addition, respect for the human rights of older persons will lead to the implementation of actions by Governments.

3. Some respondents referred to specific challenges faced in their countries. For example, Lebanon stated that the rights of older persons may be overlooked because their issues are often still viewed through a welfare prism, which has delayed legislation on the protection of their rights.

^a E/CN.5/2009/5.

4. Portugal, while agreeing that the rights of older persons could be a priority theme for implementation, pointed out that some countries have moved beyond the stage of ensuring the rights of older persons. Many Governments face resource constraints, and have been unable to complete priorities and mainstreaming ageing into the wider policy arena. Portugal suggested that, if those issues could be resolved, the Madrid Plan could be a much better tool for the protection of rights "already clearly recognized in several human rights treaties and other international instruments".
5. Denmark, France, Monaco and Switzerland did not agree that the priority focus should be on human rights. Both France and Monaco stated that the fight against discrimination in general already ensured the rights of older persons, and France suggested that efforts should focus on intergenerational solidarity, which it viewed as more essential to the improved functioning of society. Switzerland stated that a report on a social policy theme should not necessarily serve as a vehicle to promote a normative approach to the rights of older persons, the benefits of which are not clear at this time. Denmark stated that both the Madrid Plan of Action and the Berlin and León Ministerial Declarations were sufficient policy documents and saw no necessity for a special rapporteur or convention or a focus on human rights.
6. Some of the respondents that supported a single option to develop a new legal mechanism such as a convention offered additional specific comments on the need for and benefits of a new instrument. Argentina noted that there is added value in an international instrument that is legally binding and that can standardize the rights of older persons and establish accountability mechanisms. Chile stated that a convention would complement the Madrid Plan of Action by eliminating the normative gap in current international legal instruments. Mali pointed out that a convention would not only improve the situation of older persons, but also lead to their further involvement in the wider society. Cuba believed that it was important to establish a reference point, with the consensus of Member States, that allowed for the extension and universality of the rights of older persons. This would be adapted, as necessary, to the context of each country. Togo believes that the elaboration and adoption of a convention would enable States Parties to recognize the growing numbers of older persons and take early action to protect their rights. Qatar noted that the results of the review and appraisal must be consolidated by the Commission for Social Development, to realize the objectives and reveal the obstacles to the implementation of the Plan of Action, in preparation for elaborating common standards and achieving a convention. Iraq noted that it is essential that a convention be developed to address a growing population group in need of health care, care and social services, employment and social inclusion.
7. Several of the respondents that favoured forming a working group on older persons and ageing within the regular session of the Commission for Social Development expressed specific objectives for the proposed group. Some favoured using the working group as a forum to discuss the rights of older persons, while others favoured using it to discuss a new legal instrument.
8. Armenia stated that discussions within a working group could produce proposals on improving the situation of older persons by implementing different mechanisms and, if necessary, developing new legislation. According to Finland, a working group would bring continuity to the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action; the group could discuss what kind of legal mechanism or instrument would

be most effective to implement the Madrid Plan and promote the rights of older persons. Finland also stated that it would be willing to discuss the possibility of commissioning a United Nations feasibility study on a new legal mechanism. Romania believed that a working group could gather the various perspectives of the Member States, with a view to elaborating a new legal instrument. Saint Lucia and the Permanent Observer of the Holy See indicated that a working group should lead to the development of a legal instrument that would set out responsibilities and establish accountability, thereby encouraging Member States to take action. Algeria noted that a working group would promote the involvement of Member States in the implementation of different texts and instruments relating to older persons and promote common agreement among members of the international community.

9. Portugal stated that a working group should identify areas where policy coordination required strengthening and share best practices, before pursuing any other options. Mexico stated that the working group could determine priorities to empower older persons, promote their rights and sensitize the public to their situation. Moldova considered that a working group would facilitate the exchange of national and international good practices on the protection of the rights of older persons.

10. Respondents that favoured the appointment of a special rapporteur on the rights of older persons expressed a variety of ideas about his or her mandate. These included promoting and advocating for older persons; monitoring the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action; providing technical assistance; and working towards the elaboration of a convention. Several Member States considered that a special rapporteur would support and complement the activities of a working group in the Commission for Social Development. Fiji indicated that a rapporteur could monitor the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. Austria considered that a special rapporteur would serve as an advocate and watchdog to promote respect for the rights of older persons globally. In addition, Austria stated that a working group might be charged with monitoring the implementation of the Madrid Plan and preparing the next review and appraisal in 2012, focusing on the priority theme of the rights of older persons. Australia noted that a rapporteur could raise the profile of the rights of older persons, in accordance with the Madrid Plan and relevant existing human rights conventions.

11. Brazil proposed that, in addition to setting up a working group, a special rapporteur should be tasked with carrying out a study on the rights of older persons in national and regional contexts. The study could be used to establish consensus on the need for a convention, perhaps within the context of regional mechanisms. The mandate of the rapporteur should include the compilation of data and the identification of problems and characteristics of the situation of older persons in each region of the world. This information could eventually contribute to building consensus on the need for a convention. Colombia stated that the rights of older persons would be strengthened globally by the appointment of a special rapporteur, who would encourage countries to work on the economic, social and cultural rights of older persons. This would allow each State to establish its own obligations, in accordance with its particular situation. A special rapporteur could achieve a new political consensus and open up a social dialogue that would improve the situation of older persons.

12. Peru considered that all three options would work according to a time frame. For instance, the appointment of a special rapporteur could be decided by the Human Rights Council and adopted in the short term, while a decision to establish a working group in the Commission for Social Development could be made during the current session and operationalized by 2011. Peru favoured the elaboration of a convention but understood that the process would take time. Uruguay considered that either a special rapporteur or a working group would provide an adequate mechanism to work on the rights of older persons in the short term, with a view to developing a convention in the medium to long term.

13. Lebanon indicated that all the approaches had merit and suggested that consideration be given to establishing a technical unit headed by the proposed special rapporteur, whose mandate would be to provide expert advice and other assistance to Member States to develop, finance and legislate support systems for older persons.

14. The Russian Federation stated that the Commission for Social Development should play a central role in improving the situation of older persons and that the development of any human rights instruments should be decided through discussions in that forum. New Zealand stated that it was open to discussing the various options put forward in the note verbale, since a greater and more informed debate on the issue is required.

15. Belarus, Belize and Costa Rica indicated that a special rapporteur, a working group and a convention should all be considered. Costa Rica detailed further objectives and methods to raise the importance of the rights of older persons at the national, regional and international levels and suggested that a consultative forum of older persons should be formed to supervise compliance with the provisions pertaining to their rights.

Annex II

Selected additional comments and clarifications provided by Member States regarding the procedure to be adopted for the second cycle of review and appraisal

1. Fiji and the Republic of Moldova stated that questionnaires completed by Member States would be the most effective procedure; the Republic of Moldova further stated that this procedure would make it possible to conduct quantitative and qualitative analyses of implementation. Australia indicated that a questionnaire, combined with the modalities of the first review and appraisal, would make it possible to collect more in-depth information for analysis and consolidation at the regional and global levels. Romania stated that the questionnaire procedure is fast and easily executed and suggested combining questionnaires with ministerial conferences or seminars to consolidate the data. Cuba wrote that questionnaires could identify areas for which no data or information had been collected and indicate policy areas that had been neglected and lacked resources.
2. Expressing its preference for the open method of coordination, Ecuador suggested establishing a national computer-based monitoring system that would be continuously updated with changes in policies on demographic ageing and older persons. Brazil emphasized that the exchange of best practices was important to enable greater cooperation in promoting the rights of older people. It was equally important to establish guidelines and indicators, since they would provide a better picture of the situation of older persons in different regions and would highlight differences between rural and urban areas. A discussion on voluntary targets could be a positive process, in line with other international initiatives in the area of human rights. Qatar believed it was essential to adopt the open coordination method in analysing and consolidating national results at the regional and international levels.
3. Finland suggested that the open method could include peer reviews, indicators, conferences and networks, which would elaborate and share best practices. The Holy See saw advantages in that procedure, which would involve the participation of older persons and other stakeholders and could continue to promote a bottom-up, participatory approach. Taking into consideration the diversity of Member States, Austria suggested holding discussions on the findings of the open method at the regional level. Belize recognized the importance of the open method, since it gave greater emphasis to guidelines and indicators, which need to be improved. The Economic Commission for Europe recognizes that, in national monitoring and evaluation exercises, Governments are increasingly requested to refer to internationally developed and collected indicators. The second cycle of review and appraisal should therefore include elements of the open method of coordination combined with the procedure used for the first review and appraisal.
4. Twenty-seven Member States endorsed reviving the procedure established for the first review and appraisal. In particular, Austria, Costa Rica, Mali, Mexico and the Philippines emphasized the importance of the regional review activities that result from national assessments. Costa Rica also emphasized the importance of the participation of older persons in the review and appraisal process. Colombia pointed out that there must be an analysis of progress by Governments with respect to ageing and old age, given that the ageing demographic is increasing and policies must be globalized and analysed in the region as a whole. Regional forums enrich

countries because it allows them to share experiences. The Russian Federation believed that conducting a national review on the situation of older persons provided an opportunity, at the preparatory stage of work, to identify gaps and take the necessary action to promote the interests of older persons at the local and national levels. Portugal stated that the bottom-up, participatory approach required strengthening and suggested that the impact of the global economic crisis on older persons should be considered as a priority in the next review and appraisal. Austria suggested that the organization of a global, high-level conference should be considered.

5. Ten Member States supported the appointment of a special rapporteur. Argentina suggested that the mandate for a rapporteur should be established through comprehensive and inclusive negotiations among all Member States. He or she would act as a catalyst for best practices, strengthening international technical cooperation on ageing. Peru proposed that the special rapporteur could help to promote more effective implementation of the Madrid Plan by Member States. In addition to appointing a special rapporteur, the Philippines recommended establishing a separate office on the protection of the rights of older persons under the United Nations umbrella. Mali stated that a special rapporteur could take recommendations from the regional review meetings to the national level, to promote further implementation of the Madrid Plan.